The MAID of the MILL.

De Wilde del. et excud. *Thornthwaite, sculp.*

Mr. BLANCHARD as RALPH

London Printed for J. Bell British Library Strand Jan.y 4. 1791.

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THE

COMIC OPERA,

OF THE

MAID OF THE MILL,

BY ISAAC BICKERSTAFF.

ADAPTED FOR

THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

As Performed at the

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN,

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,

BY PERMISSION OF THE MANAGERS.

The Lines diſtinguiſhed by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Repreſentation.

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REGIA
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TO

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

WILLIAM,

DUKE OF GLOUCESTER,

May it pleaſe your Royal Highneſs,

WHEN I preſumed to ſolicit the honour of laying the ſubſequent trifle at your Royal Highneſs's feet, it was not without a thorough conſciouſneſs of the little value of the offering I was going to make; but I conſidered, mean as it was, it would ſerve as a teſtimony of my devotion; and to a Prince happy in his love of the arts, nothing could be unacceptable, which bore the remoteſt analogy to them.

How far the Comic Opera, under proper regulations, has a right to be acknowledged for a junior offspring of the Drama, and as ſuch become candidate for a ſhare of public encouragement, I ſhall not pretend to determine; but if it can be rendered an agreeable amuſement, the Engliſh Theatre has never ſcrupled to adopt what was capable of pleaſing there; and though, as a work of genius, it is by no means to be ſet in competition with good Tragedies and Comedies, it may, I apprehend, be permitted as an occaſional relief to them, without bringing either our taſte or underſtanding into queſtion.

I need not inform your Royal Highneſs, that in France, where the ſtage has been cultivated with more care, and * ſucceſs, than in any other country, this ſpecies of entertainment is received with very great applauſe; nor is it thought an injury to Corneille, and Moliere, that the pieces of Anſeaume and Favart, meet with ſucceſs.

It is true, among the French, Comic Operas have very often the advantage of being extremely well written; of which, *On ne s'aviſe jamais de tout*, *Le Roy et le*

* This aſſertion can never be admitted—He who prefers the tedious harangue of French Dramas to the buſineſs and paſſion of our own, will never write better than Bickerſtaff. THE EDITOR.

Fermier, and ſome others, are an inſtance; nor would the beſt compoſition of the greateſt maſter, make a very contemptible poem paſs on an audience: I wiſh I could aſſert with truth, that in this reſpect we fall nothing behind our neighbours, and that what I here preſent to your Royal Highneſs, might lay claim to ſome degree of merit, even in the writing: but, though I cannot do this, permit me to ſay, I have attempted to render it a little intereſting, and not wholly undiverting, as far as the muſic, my principal care, would give me leave.

But I humbly beg your Royal Highneſs's pardon; in applying to the Connoiſſeur, I forget that I am at the ſame time addreſſing a Great Prince: indeed, there is a ſubject on which I could dwell with the trueſt pleaſure; but I am too well inſtructed in your Royal Highneſs's character, to dare to offend you with a language which forms and cuſtoms too often impoſe upon princes, a neceſſity of hearing; I mean their own praiſe; to thoſe who are moſt deſerving, ever leaſt welcome.

I therefore, ſubſcribe myſelf,

With the profoundeſt reſpect,

May it pleaſe your Royal Highneſs,

Your Royal Highneſs's,

Moſt obedient,

Moſt devoted, and

Moſt humble ſervant,

THE AUTHOR.

THE MAID OF THE MILL.

THIS piece is confeſſedly borrowed from RICHARDSON'S too celebrated Novel of *Pamela*; and, like its original, involves a ſtory that can ſcarcely be aſſimilated with the uſual events of ſociety: it poſſeſſes much neat ſentiment, but without due force; and ſome characters, if natural, not preciſely ſocial.

The primary idea which it inculcates, is unqueſtionably juſt, and amiable; namely, that the uniform proſecution of good, will eventually lead to dignity and felicity, and that every female, however humbly born, may render herſelf honoured and protected by the undeviating practice of innocence; yet, on the other hand, there may be ſome doubts, if the example it produces, may not, in ſome ſort, twiſt the intellects of unthinking young women, who may be induced to ſuppoſe, that the ſame very fortunate conſequences, ſhould attend the ſame pretenſions to merit, and that the probable failure of their extravagant hopes, may make them miſerable, if not engender events of a more diſaſtrous complexion.

The various perſonages in this drama are drawn with more ſoftneſs than ſpirit, which, it muſt be declared, this ſubject will admit, more than almoſt any other, he could have choſen, —RALPH, whom I conceive to be the moſt finiſhed portrait among them, is ſuch a clown, in all his movements and language, as every village exhibits: his blunt oppoſition to his ſiſters refined qualifications, and his attempts to juſtify his undutifulneſs to his father, upon the idea that PATTY is ſuffered to be idle without admonition, are both characteriſtic and pleaſant:

LORD AIMWORTH, is ſuch an honourable and delicate character, as every nobleman ſhould be: his notions of diſtinction do not reſt merely upon the ſplendor of his birth, or the extent of his fortune: he is not inſolent becauſe he has a title, nor is he oppreſſive becauſe he has power: the conflict of his ſoul, when reflecting upon the charms and attractive attributes in the Miller's daughter, is ſuch as argues the poſſeſſion of diſcrimination and tenderneſs; his reſolution not to treat a lovely creature, who is in his command, with unworthineſs, is ſupremely creditable to his ſtation—if there are many ſuch among our nobility I ſhall rejoice; if there are not I wiſh there were.

PATTY, is rendered ſo nearly perfect, by the labour of the Author, that all rational ſpectators become pleaſed, that her lot ſhould be ſo well ſuited to her virtues; the gentleneſs and good ſenſe, which are ſo intermingled in her deportment, diſpoſe all well regulated minds to authoriſe her claims upon

LORD AIMWORTH's love and bounty; her purity and ſimple manners, have been ſo far irradiated by precept and ſtudy, as to make her fitneſs for the ſudden elevation into which ſhe is brought, undoubted.—

GILES, is a neceſſary inſtrument in the conſtruction of the plot, and no ungenial repreſentative of the whole body of Engliſh farmers: his bold ruſticity is ſo far corrected by his meaning well, as not to give offence; and his eſſays to be humourous are compoſed of ſuch materials, as may probably have influence in an uncultivated underſtanding.

SIR HARRY SYCAMORE and his LADY, are tolerable ſpecimens of nuptial acrimony: the Baronet as a huſband without dominion, and the Lady as a wife without diſcretion; yet it is ſo managed, that the firſt is not contemptible, nor the latter diſguſting.

MERVIN and THEODOSIA, are two of thoſe walking Ladies and Gentlemen, who are interwoven in nearly all our Comic productions: they are eternally under the guidance of the Paphian God, and conſequently, whenever they depart from propriety in action or expreſſion, they bear an accompanying apology for the error.

FAIRFIELD, the Miller, is of that order of beings, who will call forth reſpect, in whatever ſtation of life they may be placed; as a man, he is honeſt; as a neighbour, he is urbane; and as a parent, he is indulgent and beneficent.

FANNY and the Gipſies, appear to me as more neceſſary to the machinery of the piece, than the moral or intereſt of the Fable.

The poetry of this Drama is not one of its beſt recommendations, although ſeveral of the Airs are not deſtitute of point and paſſion; I have ſelected a part of one, which I conceive to be the moſt complete; it is delivered by PATTY.

Oft we ſee the homely flow'r,
Bearing, at the hedge's ſide;
Virtues of more ſov'reign pow'r,
Than the garden's gayeſt pride.

To be concluſive, the MAID of the MILL is not deſerving to be claſſed among the moſt eſſential Operas on the Britiſh Stage; yet its tendencies are ſo proper, that it cannot be ſeen or peruſed without improving the manners of ſome, and the thoughts of many.

ANTHONY PASQUIN.

PREFACE.

THERE is ſcarce a language in Europe, in which there is not a play taken from our romance of Pamela: in Italian and French particularly, ſeveral writers of the firſt eminence have choſen it for the ſubject of different dramas.

The little piece now ventured into the world, owes its origin to the ſame ſource: not only the general ſubject is drawn from Pamela, but almoſt every circumſtance in it. The reader will almoſt immediately recollect the courtſhip of Parſon Williams—the ſquire's jealouſy and behaviour in conſequence of it; and the difficulty he had to prevail with himſelf to marry the girl, notwithſtanding his paſſion for her—the miller is a cloſe copy of Goodman Andrews—Ralph is imagined, from the wild ſon which he is mentioned to have had—Theodoſia, from the young lady of quality, with whom Mr. B. through his ſiſter's perſuaſion, is ſaid to have been in treaty before his marriage with Pamela—even the gipſies are borrowed from a trifling incident in the latter part of the work.

In proſecuting this plan, which he has varied from the original, as far as he thought convenient, the author has made ſimplicity his principal aim. His ſcenes, on account of the muſic, which could not be perfect without ſuch a mixture, neceſſarily conſiſt of ſerious and buffoon. He knows groſſneſs and inſipidity lay in his way: whether he has had art enough to avoid ſtumbling upon them, the candid public are left to determine.

DRA-

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DRURY LANE.

	Men.
LORD AIMWORTH	Mr. Kelly
Sir HARRY SYCAMORE . . .	Mr. Waldron
MERWIN	Mr. Williames
FAIRFIELD	Mr. Aickin
GILES	Mr. Dignum
RALPH	Mr. Suett.

	Women.
LADY SYCAMORE	Mrs. Hopkins
THEODOSIA	Mrs. Forſter
PATTY	Mrs. Crouch
FANNY	Mrs. Bland.

COVENT GARDEN.

	Men.
LORD AIMWORTH	Mr. Johnſtone
Sir HARRY SYCAMORE . . .	Mr. Quick
MERVIN	Mr. Townſend
FAIRFIELD	Mr. Richardſon
GILES	Mr. Haymes
RALPH	Mr. Munden.

	Women.
LADY SYCAMORE	Mrs. Davenport
THEODOSIA	Mrs. Clendining
PATTY	Mrs. Mountain
FANNY	Mrs. Martyr.

THE

MAID OF THE MILL.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A rural Proſpect, with a Mill at work. Several People employed about; on one ſide a Houſe, PATTY *reading in the Window; on the other a Barn, where* FANNY *ſits mending a Net;* GILES *appears at a Diſtance in the Mill;* FAIRFIELD *and* RALPH *taking Sacks from a Cart.*

CHORUS.

FREE from ſorrow, free from ſtrife,
O how bleſt the miller's life!
Chearful working through the day,
Still he laughs and ſings away.
Nought can vex him,
Nought perplex him,
While there's griſt to make him gay.

DUET.

Let the great enjoy the bleſſings
By indulgent fortune ſent:
What can wealth, can grandeur offer
More than plenty and content.

Fai. Well done, well done; 'tis a ſure ſign work goes on merrily when folks ſing at it. Stop the mill there; and doſt hear, ſon Ralph, hoiſt yon ſacks of flour upon this cart, lad, and drive it up to Lord Aimworth's; coming from London laſt night with ſtrange company, no doubt there are calls enough for it by this time.

Ral.

Ral. Ay feyther, whether or not, there's no doubt but you'll find enow for a body to do.

Fai. What doſt mutter? Is't not a ſtrange plague that thou can'ſt never go about any thing with a good will; murrain take it, what's come o'er the boy? So then thou wilt not ſet a hand to what I have deſired thee!

Ral. Why don't you ſpeak to ſuſter Pat to do ſomething then? I thought when ſhe came home to us after my old lady's death, ſhe was to have been of ſome uſe in the houſe; but inſtead of that, ſhe ſits there all day, reading outlandiſh books, dreſſed like a fine madumaſel, and the never a word you ſays to ſhe.

Fai. Sirrah, don't ſpeak ſo diſreſpectfully of thy ſiſter; thou wilt never have the tithe of her deſerts.

Ral. Why I'll read and write with her for what ſhe dares; and as for playing on the hapſicols, I thinks her rich good mother might have learn'd her ſomething more properer, ſeeing ſhe did not remember to leave her a legacy at laſt.

Fai. That's none of thy buſineſs, ſirrah.

Ral. A farmer's wife painting pictures, and playing on the hapſicols; why I'll be hang'd now, for all as old as ſhe is, if ſhe knows any more about milking a cow, than I do of ſewing a petticoat.

Fai. Ralph, thou haſt been drinking this morning.

Ral. Well, if ſo be as I have, its nothing out of your pocket, nor mine neither.

Fai. Who has been giving thee liquor, ſirrah?

Ral. Why it was wind—a gentleman guve me.

Fai. A gentleman!

Ral. Yes, a gentleman that's come piping hot from London: he is below at the Cat and Bagpipes; I cod he rides a choice bit of a nag; I dare to ſay ſhe'd fetch as good as forty pounds at ever a fair in all England.

Fai. A fig's end for what ſhe'd fetch; mind thy buſineſs, or by the lord Harry———

Ral. Why I won't do another hand's turn to-day now, ſo that's flat.

Fai.

Fai. Thou wilt not—

Ral. Why no I wont; ſo what argufies your putting yourſelf in a paſſion, feyther! I've promiſed to go back to the gentleman; and I don't know but what he's a lord too, and mayhap he may do more for me than you thinks of.

Fai. Well, ſon Ralph, run thy gait; but remember I tell thee, thou wilt repent this untowardneſs.

Ral. Why, how ſhall I repent it? Mayhap you'll turn me out of your ſervice; a match; with all hearts —I cod I don't care three braſs pins.

AIR.

If that's all you want, who the plague will be ſorry,
'Twere better by half to dig ſtones in a quarry;
For my ſhare I'm weary of what is got by't:
S'fleſh! here's ſuch a racket, ſuch ſcolding and coiling,
You're never content, but when folks are a toiling,
And drudging like horſes from morning 'till night.

You think I'm afraid, but the difference to ſhew you;
Firſt yonder's your ſhovel; your ſacks too I throw you;
Henceforward take care of your matters who will;
They're welcome to ſlave for your wages who need 'em,
Tol lol de rol lol, I have purchas'd my freedom,
And never hereafter ſhall work at the mill.

SCENE II.

FAIRFIELD, PATTY.

Fai. Dear heart, dear heart! I proteſt this ungracious boy puts me quite beſide myſelf. Patty, my dear, come down into the yard a little, and keep me company —and you, thieves, vagabonds, gipſies, out here, 'tis you who debauch my ſon.

AIR.

AIR.

Pat. *In love to pine and languiſh,*
Yet know your paſſion vain;
To harbour heart-felt anguiſh,
Yet fear to tell your pain.

What powers unrelenting,
Severer ills inventing,
Can ſharpen pangs like theſe;
Where days and nights tormenting,
Yield not a moment's eaſe!

Fai. Well, Patty, Maſter Goodman, my Lord's ſteward, has been with me juſt now, and I find we are like to have great doings; his lordſhip has brought down Sir Harry Sycamore and his family, and there is more company expected in a few days.

Pat. I know Sir Harry very well; he is by marriage a diſtant relation of my Lord's.

Fai. Pray what ſort of a young body is the daughter there? I think ſhe uſed to be with you at the caſtle, three or four ſummers ago, when my young Lord was out upon his travels.

Pat. Oh! very often; ſhe was a great favourite of my lady's: pray father is ſhe come down?

Fai. Why you know the report laſt night, about my Lord's going to be married; by what I can learn ſhe is; and there is likely to be a nearer relationſhip between the families, ere long. It ſeems, his Lordſhip was not over willing for the match, but the friends on both ſides in London preſſed it ſo hard: then there's a ſwinging fortune: Maſter Goodman tells me a matter of twenty or thirty thouſand pounds.

Pat. If it was a million, father, it would not be more than my Lord Aimworth deſerves; I ſuppoſe the wedding will be celebrated here at the manſion-houſe.

Fai. So it is thought, as ſoon as things can be properly prepared——And now, Patty, if I could but ſee thee a little merry—Come, bleſs thee, pluck up thy ſpirits—To be ſure thou haſt ſuſtained, in the death of

thy

thy lady, a heavy loſs; ſhe was a parent to thee; nay, and better, inaſmuch as ſhe took thee when thou wert but a babe, and gave thee an education which thy natural parents could not afford to do.

Pat. Ah! dear father, don't mention what, perhaps, has been my greateſt misfortune.

Fai. Nay then, Patty, what's become of all thy ſenſe, that people talk ſo much about?——But I have ſomething to ſay to thee which I would have thee conſider ſeriouſly.——I believe I need not tell thee, my child, that a young maiden, after ſhe is marriageable, eſpecially if ſhe has any thing about her to draw people's notice, is liable to ill tongues, and a many croſs accidents; ſo that the ſooner ſhe's out of harm's way the better.

Pat. Undoubtedly, father, there are people enough who watch every opportunity to gratify their own malice; but when a young woman's conduct is unblameable——

Fai. Why, Patty, there may be ſomething in that; but you know ſlander will leave ſpots, where malice finds none: I ſay, then, a young woman's beſt ſafeguard is a good huſband. Now there is our neighbour, Farmer Giles; he is a ſober, honeſt, induſtrious young fellow, and one of the wealthieſt of theſe parts; he is greatly taken with thee; and it is not the firſt time I have told thee I ſhould be glad to have him for a ſon-in-law.

Pat. And I have told you as often, father, I would ſubmit myſelf entirely to your direction; whatever you think proper for me, is ſo.

Fai. Why that's ſpoken like a dutiful, ſenſible girl; get thee in, then, and leave me to manage it——— Perhaps our neighbour Giles is not a gentleman; but what are the greateſt part of our country gentlemen good for?

Pat. Very true, father. The ſentiments, indeed, have frequently little correſpondence with the condition; and it is according to them alone we ought to regulate our eſteem.

AIR.

What are outward forms and shews,
To an honest heart compar'd?
Oft the rustic, wanting those,
Has the nobler portion shar'd.

Oft we see the homely flower
Bearing at the hedge's side
Virtues of more sovereign pow'r
Than the garden's gayest pride.

SCENE III.

FAIRFIELD, GILES.

Giles. Well, Master Fairfield, you and Miss Pat have had a long discourse together; did you tell her that I was come down?

Fai. No, in truth, friend Giles; but I mentioned our affair at a distance; and I think there is no fear.

Giles. That's right—and when shall us—You do know I have told you my mind often and often.

Fai. Farmer, give us thy hand; nobody doubts thy good will to me and my girl; and you may take my word, I would rather give her to thee than another; for I am main certain thou wilt make her a good husband.

Giles. Thanks to your good opinion, Master Fairfield; if such be my hap, I hope there will be no cause of complaint.

Fai. And I promise thee my daughter will make thee a choice wife. But thou know'st, friend Giles, that I, and all belongs to me, have great obligations to Lord Aimworth's family; Patty, in particular, would be one of the most ungrateful wretches this day breathing if she was to do the smallest thing contrary to their consent and approbation.

Giles. Nay, nay, 'tis well enough known to all the country, she was the old Lady's darling.

Fai.

Fai. Well, Maſter Giles, I'll aſſure thee ſhe is not one whit leſs obliged to my Lord himſelf. When his mother was taken off ſo ſuddenly, and his affairs called him up to London, if Patty would have remained at the caſtle, ſhe might have had the command of all; or if ſhe would have gone any where elſe, he would have paid for her fixing, let the coſt be what it would.

Giles. Why, for that manner, folks did not ſpare to ſay, that my Lord had a ſort of a ſneaking kindneſs for her himſelf: and I remember, at one time, it was rife all about the neighbourhood, that ſhe was actually to be our lady.

Fai. Pho, pho! a pack of woman's tales.

Giles. Nay, to be ſure they'll ſay any thing.

Fai. My Lord's a man of a better way of thinking, friend Giles—but this is neither here nor there to our buſineſs———Have you been at the caſtle yet?

Giles. Who I! Bleſs your heart I did not hear a ſyllable of his Lordſhip's being come down, 'till your lad told me.

Fai. No! why then go up to my Lord, let him know you have a mind to make a match with my daughter; hear what he has to ſay to it; and afterwards we will try if we can't ſettle matters.

Giles. Go up to my Lord! I cod if that be all, I'll do it with the biggeſt pleaſure in life.—But where's Miſs Pat? Might one not ax her how ſhe do?

Fai. Never ſpare it; ſhe's within there.

Giles. I ſees her—odd rabbit it, this hatch is locked now———Miſs Pat———Miſs Patty—She makes believe not to hear me.

Fai. Well, well, never mind; thou'lt come and eat a morſel of dinner with us.

Giles. Nay, but juſt to have a bit of a joke with her at preſent———Miſs Pat, I ſay———won't you open the door?

AIR.

Hark! 'tis I your own true lover,
After walking three long miles,
One kind look at leaſt diſcover,
Come and ſpeak a word to Giles.

You alone my heart I fix on:
Ah, you little cunning vixen!
I can ſee your roguiſh ſmiles.
Addſlids! my mind is ſo poſſeſt,
Till we're ſped, I ſhan't have reſt;
Only ſay the thing's a bargain,
Here an you like it,
Ready to ſtrike it,
There's at once an end of arguing:
I'm her's, ſhe's mine;
Thus we ſeal, thus we ſign.

SCENE IV.

FAIRFIELD, PATTY.

Fai. Patty, child, why would'ſt not thou open the door for our neighbour Giles?

Pat. Really, father, I did not know what was the matter.

Fai. Well, another time; he'll be here again preſently. He's gone up to the caſtle, Patty; thou know'ſt it would not be right for us to do any thing without giving his Lordſhip intelligence, ſo I have ſent the farmer to let him know that he is willing, and we are willing; and with his Lordſhip's approbation—

Pat. Oh, dear father—what are you going to ſay?

Fai. Nay child, I would not have ſtir'd a ſtep for fifty pounds, without advertiſing his Lordſhip beforehand.

Pat. But ſurely, ſurely, you have not done this raſh, this precipitate thing.

Fai. How raſh, how is it raſh, Patty? I don't underſtand thee.

Pat. Oh, you have diſtreſs'd me beyond imagination—but why would you not give me notice, ſpeak to me firſt?

Fai. Why han't I ſpoken to thee an hundred times? No, Patty, 'tis thou that would'ſt diſtreſs me, and thou'lt break my heart.

Pat.

Pat. Dear father!

Fai. All I desire is to see thee well settled; and now that I am likely to do so, thou art not contented; I am sure the farmer is as sightly a clever lad as any in the country; and is he not as good as we?

Pat. 'Tis very true, father; I am to blame; pray forgive me.

Fai. Forgive thee! Lord help thee, my child, I am not angry with thee; but quiet thyself, Patty, and thou'lt see all this will turn out for the best.

SCENE V.

PATTY.

What will become of me?—my Lord will certainly imagine this is done with my consent—Well, is he not himself going to be married to a lady, suitable to him in rank, suitable to him in fortune, as this farmer is to me; and under what pretence can I refuse the husband my father has found for me! Shall I say that I have dared to raise my inclinations above my condition, and presumed to love, where my duty taught me only gratitude and respect? Alas! who could live in the house with Lord Aimworth, see him, converse with him, and not love him? I have this consolation, however, my folly is yet undiscover'd to any; else, how should I be ridiculed and despised; nay, would not my Lord himself despise me, especially, if he knew that I have more than once construed his natural affability and politeness into sentiments as unworthy of him, as mine are bold and extravagant. Unexampled vanity! did I possess any thing capable of attracting such a notice, to what purpose could a man of his distinction cast his eyes on a girl, poor, meanly born, and indebted for every thing to the ill-placed bounty of his family?

AIR.

Ah! why should fate, pursuing
A wretched thing like me,
Heap ruin thus on ruin,
And add to misery?

The griefs I languiſh'd under,
In ſecret let me ſhare;
But this new ſtroke of thunder,
Is more than I can bear.

SCENE VI.

Changes to a Chamber in Lord AIMWORTH's *Houſe.*

SIR HARRY SYCAMORE, THEODOSIA.

S. Har. Well, but Theodoſia, child, you are quite unreaſonable.

The. Pardon me, papa, it is not I am unreaſonable: when I gave way to my inclinations for Mr. Mervin, he did not ſeem leſs agreeable to you and my mamma than he was acceptable to me. It is, therefore, you have been unreaſonable, in firſt encouraging his addreſſes, and afterwards forbidding him your houſe, in order to bring me down here, to force me on a gentleman——

S. Har. Force you, Doſſy, what do you mean! By the la, I would not force you on the Czar of Muſcovy.

The. And yet, papa, what elſe can you call it? for tho' Lord Aimworth is extremely attentive and obliging, I aſſure you he is by no means one of the moſt ardent of lovers.

S. Har. Ardent, ah! there it is; you girls never think there is any love, without kiſſing and hugging; but you ſhou'd conſider, child, my Lord Aimworth is a polite man, and has been abroad in France and Italy, where theſe things are not the faſhion; I remember when I was on my travels, among the madames and ſignoras, we never ſaluted more than the tip of the ear.

The. Really, papa, you have a very ſtrange opinion of my delicacy; I had no ſuch ſtuff in my thoughts.

S. Har. Well come, my poor Doſſy, I ſee you are chagrin'd, but you know it is not my fault; on the contrary, I aſſure you, I had always a great regard for young Mervin, and ſhould have been very glad——

The.

The. How then, papa, could you join in forcing me to write him that ſtrange letter, never to ſee me more; or how indeed could I comply with your commands? what muſt he think of me?

S. Har. Ay, but hold, Doſſy, your mamma convinced me that he was not ſo proper a ſon-in-law for us as Lord Aimworth,

The. Convinced you! Ah, my dear papa, you were not convinced.

S. Har. What don't I know when I am convinced?

The. Why no, papa; becauſe your good-nature and eaſineſs of temper is ſuch, that you pay more reſpect to the judgment of mamma, and leſs to your own, than you ought to do.

S. Har. Well, but Doſſy, don't you ſee how your mamma loves me; if my finger does but ache, ſhe's like a bewitched woman; and, if I was to die, I don't believe ſhe would outlive the burying of me: nay, ſhe has told me as much herſelf.

The. Her fondneſs indeed is very extraordinary.

S. Har. Beſides, could you give up the proſpect of being a counteſs, and miſtreſs of this fine place?

The. Yes, truly could I.

AIR.

With the man that I love, was I deſtin'd to dwell,
On a mountain, a moor, in a cot, in a cell,
Retreats the moſt barren, moſt deſert, would be
More pleaſing than courts or a palace to me.

Let the vain and the venal, in wedlock aſpire
To what folly eſteems, and the vulgar admire:
I yield them the bliſs, where their wiſhes are plac'd,
Inſenſible creatures! 'tis all they can taſte.

SCENE VII.

SIR HARRY, THEODOSIA, LADY SYCAMORE.

L. Syc. Sir Harry, where are you?

S. Har. Here, my lamb.

L. Syc.

L. Syc. I am juſt come from looking over his Lordſhip's family trinkets.——Well, Miſs Sycamore, you are a happy creature, to have diamonds, equipage, title, all the bleſſings of life pour'd thus upon you at once.

The. Bleſſings, Madam! Do you think then I am ſuch a wretch as to place my felicity in the poſſeſſion of any ſuch trumpery.

L. Syc. Upon my word, Miſs, you have a very diſdainful manner of expreſſing yourſelf; I believe there are very few young women of faſhion, who would think any ſacrifice they could make too much for them.—Did you ever hear the like of her, Sir Harry?

S. Har. Why, my dear, I have juſt been talking to her in the ſame ſtrain, but whatever ſhe has got in her head——

L. Syc. Oh, it is Mr. Mervin, her gentleman of Bucklerſbury.—Fye, Miſs, marry a cit! Where is your pride, your vanity; have you nothing of the perſon of diſtinction about you?

S. Har. Well, but my Lady, you know I am a piece of a cit myſelf, as I may ſay, for my great-grandfather was a dry-ſalter.

The. And yet, madam, you condeſcended to marry my papa.

L. Syc. Well, if I did Miſs, I had but five thouſand pounds to my portion, and Sir Harry knows I was paſt eight and thirty, before I would liſten to him.

S. Har. Nay, Doſſy, that's true, your mamma own'd eight and thirty, before we were married: but by the la, my dear, you were a lovely angel; and by candle-light nobody would have taken you for above five and twenty.

L. Syc. Sir Harry, you remember the laſt time I was at my Lord Duke's.

S. Har. Yes, my love, it was the very day your little bitch Minxey pupt.

L. Syc. And pray what did the whole family ſay; my Lord John, and my Lord Thomas, and my Lady Ducheſs in particular? Couſin, ſays her grace to me—for ſhe always called me couſin—

The.

The. Well, but Madam, to cut this matter ſhort at once, my father has a great regard for Mr. Mervin, and would conſent to our union with all his heart.

L. Syc. Do you ſay ſo, Sir Harry?

S. Har. Who, I, love!

L. Syc. Then all my care and prudence are come to nothing.

S. Har. Well, but ſtay my lady—Doſſy, you are always making miſchief.

The. Ah! my dear ſweet———

L. Syc. Do Miſs, that's right, coax———

The. No, Madam, I am not capable of any ſuch meanneſs.

L. Syc. 'Tis very civil of you to contradict me however.

S. Har. Eh! what's that—hands off Doſſy, don't come near me.

AIR.

Why how now Miſs pert,
Do you think to divert
My anger by fawning and ſtroking?
Would you make me a fool,
Your play-thing, your tool?
Was ever young minx ſo provoking?
Get out of my ſight,
'Twould be ſerving you right,
To lay a ſound doſe of the laſh on;
Contradict your mamma,
I've a mind by the la!
But I won't put myſelf in a paſſion.

SCENE VIII.

SIR HARRY, LADY SYCAMORE, LORD AIMWORTH, GILES.

L. Aim. Come farmer, you may come in, there are none here but friends.—Sir Harry, your ſervant.

S. Har. My Lord, I kiſs your Lordſhip's hands—I hope he did not overhear us ſquabbling—" I have been " chattering here with my wife and daughter, my Lord

" —We

" ——We have been examining your Lordſhip's pic-
" tures.

L. Aim. " I flatter myſelf, then, her Ladyſhip found
" ſomething to entertain her; there are a few of
" them counted tolerable."——Well now, Maſter Giles what is it you have got to ſay to me? If I can do you any ſervice, this company will give you leave to ſpeak.

Giles. I thank your Lordſhip, I has not got a great deal to ſay; I do come to your Lordſhip about a little buſineſs, if you'll pleaſe to give me the hearing.

L. Aim. Certainly, only let me know what it is.

Giles. Why an pleaſe you my Lord, being left alone, as I may ſay, feyther dead, and all the buſineſs upon my own hands, I do think of ſettling and taking a wife, and am come to ax your honour's conſent.

L. Aim. My conſent, farmer! if that be neceſſary, you have it with all my heart—I hope you have taken care to make a prudent choice.

Giles. Why I do hope ſo, my Lord.

L. Aim. Well, and who is the happy fair one? Does ſhe live in my houſe?

Giles. No, my Lord, ſhe does not live in your houſe, but ſhe's a parſon of your acquaintance.

L. Aim. Of my acquaintance!

Giles. No offence, I hope your honour.

L. Aim. None in the leaſt; but how is ſhe an acquaintance of mine?

Giles. Your Lordſhip do know Miller Fairfield?

L. Aim. Well——

Giles. And Patty Fairfield, his daughter, my Lord?

L. Aim. Ay, is it her you think of marrying?

Giles. Why, if ſo be as your Lordſhip has no objection; to be ſure we will do nothing without your conſent and approbation.

L. Aim. Upon my word, farmer, you have made an excellent choice—It is a god-daughter of my mother's, Madam, who was bred up under her care, and I proteſt I do not know a more amiable young woman.——But are you ſure, farmer, that Patty herſelf is inclinable to this match.

Giles.

Giles. O yes, my Lord, I am ſartain of that.

L. Aim. Perhaps then ſhe deſired you to come and aſk my conſent?

Giles. Why as far as this here, my Lord; to be ſure, the miller did not care to publiſh the banns, without making your Lordſhip acquainted—But I hope your honour's not angry with I.

L. Aim. Angry farmer! why ſhould you think ſo?—what intereſt have I in it to be angry?

S. Har. And ſo, honeſt farmer, you are going to be married to little Patty Fairfield? She's an old acquaintance of mine; how long have you and ſhe been ſweethearts?

Giles. Not a long while, an pleaſe your worſhip.

S. Har. Well, her father's a good warm fellow; I ſuppoſe you take care that ſhe brings ſomething to make the pot boil?

L. Syc. What does that concern you, Sir Harry? how often muſt I tell you of meddling in other people's affairs?

S. Har. My Lord, a penny for your thoughts.

L. Aim. I beg your pardon, Sir Harry; upon my word, I did not think where I was.

Giles. Well then, your honour, I'll make bold to be taking my leave; I may ſay you gave conſent for Miſs Patty and I to go on.

L. Aim. Undoubtedly, farmer, if ſhe approves of it: but are you not afraid that her education has rendered her a little unſuitable for a wife for you?

L. Syc. Oh my Lord, if the girl's handy——

S. Har. Oh, ay—when a girl's handy——

Giles. Handy! Why, ſaving reſpect, there's nothing comes amiſs to her; ſhe's cute at every varſal kind of thing.

AIR.

Odd's my life, ſearch England over,
An you match her in her ſtation,
I'll be bound to fly the nation:
And be ſure as well I love her.

Do but feel my heart a beating,
Still her pretty name repeating,
Here's the work 'tis always at,
Pitty, Patty, pat, pit, pat.

When she makes the music tinkle,
What on yearth can sweeter be?
Then her little eyes so twinkle,
'Tis a feast to hear and see.

SCENE IX.

LORD AIMWORTH, SIR HARRY, LADY SYCAMORE.

S. Har. By dad this is a good merry fellow, is not he in love, with his pitty patty—And so my Lord you have given your consent that he shall marry your mother's old housekeeper. Ah, well, I can see——

L. Aim. Nobody doubts, Sir Harry, that you are very clear-sighted.

S. Har. Yes, yes, let me alone, I know what's what: I was a young fellow once myself; and I should have been glad of a tenant, to take a pretty girl off my hands now and then, as well as another.

L. Aim. I protest, my dear friend, I don't understand you.

L. Syc. Nor nobody else—Sir Harry you are going at some beastliness now.

S. Har. Who I, my Lady? Not I, as I hope to live and breathe; 'tis nothing to us you know, what my Lord does before he's married; when I was a bachelor, I was a devil among the wenches, myself; and yet I vow to George, my Lord, since I knew my Lady Sycamore, and we shall be man and wife eighteen years, if we live till next Candlemas-day, I never had to do——

L. Syc. Sir Harry, come out of the room, I desire.

S. Har. Why, what's the matter, my lady, I did not say any harm?

L. Syc. I see what you are driving at, you want to make me faint.

S. Har. I want to make you faint, my lady!

L. Syc. Yes you do—and if you don't come out this inſtant I ſhall fall down in the chamber—I beg, my Lord, you won't ſpeak to him.—Will you come out, Sir Harry.

S. Har. Nay, but my lady!

L. Syc. No, I will have you out.

SCENE X.

Lord Aimworth.

This worthy Baronet, and his lady, are certainly a very whimſical couple; however, their daughter is perfectly amiable in every reſpect; and yet I am ſorry I have brought her down here; for can I in honour marry her, while my affections are engaged to another? To what does the pride of condition and the cenſure of the world force me! Muſt I then renounce the only perſon that can make me happy; becauſe, becauſe what? becauſe ſhe's a miller's daughter; Vain pride, and unjuſt cenſure! has ſhe not all the graces that education can give her ſex; improved by a genius ſeldom found among the higheſt? has ſhe not modeſty, ſweetneſs of temper, and beauty of perſon, capable of adorning a rank the moſt exalted? But it is too late to think of theſe things now; my hand is promiſed, my honour engaged: and if it was not ſo, ſhe has engaged herſelf; the farmer is a perſon to her mind, and I have authorized their union by my approbation.

AIR.

The mad-man thus, at times, we ſee,
With ſeeming reaſon bleſt;
His looks, his words, his thoughts are free,
And ſpeak a mind at reſt.

But ſhort the calms of eaſe and ſenſe,
And ah! uncertain too;
While that idea lives from whence
At firſt his frenzy grew.

SCENE XI.

Changes to the Proſpect of the Mill.

Enter RALPH, *with* MERVIN, *in a riding dreſs, followed by* FANNY.

Fan. Ah, pray your honour, try if you have not ſomething to ſpare for poor Fanny the gipſey.

Ral. I tell you, Fan, the gentleman has no change about him; why the plague will you be ſo troubleſome?

Fan. Lord what is it to you, if his honour has a mind to give me a trifle? Do pray, gentleman, put your hand in your pocket.

Mer. I am almoſt diſtracted! Ungrateful Theodoſia, to change ſo ſuddenly, and write me ſuch a letter! However, I am reſolved to have my diſmiſſion face to face; this letter may be forced from her by her mother, who I know was never cordially my friend: I could not get a ſight of her in London, but here they will be leſs on their guard; and ſee her I will, by one means or other.

Fan. Then your honour will not extend your charity?

AIR.

I am young, and I am friendleſs,
And poor, alas! withal;
Sure my ſorrows will be endleſs;
In vain for help I call.
Have ſome pity in your nature,
To relieve a wretched creature,
Though the gift be ne'er ſo ſmall.

May you, poſſeſſing every bleſſing,
Still inherit Sir, all you merit Sir,
And never know what it is to want;
Sweet heaven, your worſhip all happineſs grant.

SCENE XII.

RALPH, MERVIN.

Ral. Now I'll go and take that money from her and I have a good mind to lick her, ſo I have.

Mer. Pho, pr'ythee ſtay where you are.

Ral. Nay, but I hate to ſee a toad ſo deviliſh greedy.

Mer. Well come, ſhe has not got a great deal, and I have thought how ſhe may do me a favour in her turn.

Ral. Ay, but you may put that out of your head, for I can tell you ſhe won't.

Mer. How ſo!

Ral. How ſo, why ſhe's as cunning as the Devil.

Mer. O ſhe is—I fancy I underſtand you. Well, in that caſe, friend Ralph——Your name's Ralph, I think?

Ral. Yes, Sir, at your ſervice, for want of a better.

Mer. I ſay then, friend Ralph, in that caſe, we will remit the favor you think of, till the lady is in a more complying humour, and try if ſhe cannot ſerve me at preſent in ſome other capacity——There are a good many gipſies hereabout, are there not?

Ral. Softly—I have a whole gang of them here in our barn; I have kept them about the place theſe three months, and all on account of ſhe.

Mer. Really.

Ral. Yea——but for your life don't ſay a word of it to any Chriſtian——I am in love with her.

Mer. Indeed!

Ral. Feyther is as mad with me about it, as Old Scratch; and I gets the plague and all of anger; but I don't mind that.

Mer. Well, friend Ralph, if you are in love, no doubt you have ſome influence over your miſtreſs; don't you think you could prevail upon her and her companions, to ſupply me with one of their habits, and let me go up with them to-day to my Lord Aimworth's.

Ral. Why do you want to go a mumming? We never do that here but in the Chriſtmas holidays.

Mer. No matter: manage this for me, and manage it with ſecreſy; and I promiſe you ſhall not go unrewarded.

Ral. Oh! as for that ſir, I don't look for any thing, I can eaſily get you a bundle of their rags: but I don't know whether you'll prevail on them to go up to my lord's, becauſe, they're afraid of a big dog that's in the yard: but I'll tell you what I can do; I can go up before you and have the dog faſtened, for I know his kennel.

Mer. That will do very well—By means of this diſguiſe I ſhall probably get a ſight of her; and I leave the reſt to love and fortune.

AIR.

Why quits the merchant, bleſt with eaſe,
The pleaſures of his native ſeat,
To tempt the dangers of the ſeas,
And climes more perilous than theſe;
Midſt freezing cold, or ſcorching heat?
He knows the hardſhips, knows the pain,
The length of way, but thinks it ſmall;
The ſweets of what he hopes to gain,
Undaunted, make him combat all.

SCENE XIII.

PATTY, RALPH, GILES, FANNY.

Giles. So his lordſhip was as willing as the flowers in May——and as I was coming along, who ſhou'd I meet but your father——and he bid me run in all haſte and tell you——for we were ſure you would be deadly glad.

Pat. I know not what buſineſs you had to go to my Lord's at all, farmer.

Giles. Nay, I only did as I was desired——Master Fairfield bid me tell you moreover, as how he wou'd have you go up to my lord out of hand, and thank him.

Ral. So she ought; and take off those cloaths, and put on what's more becoming her station; you know my father spoke to you of that this morning too.

Pat. Brother, I shall obey my father.

Lye still my heart; oh! fatal stroke,
That kills at once my hopes and me.

Giles. *Miss Pat!*

Pat. ——*What?*

Giles. —— *Nay I only spoke:*

Ral. *Take courage, mon, she does but joke.*
Come, Suster, somewhat kinder be.

Fan. *This is a thing the most oddest,*
Some folks are so plaguily modest;

Ral. Fan. { *Were we in the case,*
To be in their place,
We'd carry it off with a different face.

Giles. *Thus I take her by the lily hand,*
So soft and white.

Ral. ——*Why now that's right;*
And kiss her too, mon, never stand.

Pat. Giles. { *What words can explain*
My pleasure—my pain?
It presses, it rises,
My heart it surprizes,
I can't keep it down, tho' I'd never so fain.

Fan. *So here the play ends,*
The lovers are friends;

Ral. *Husb!*

Fan. ——*Tusb!*

Giles. ——*Nab!*

Pat. ——*Psha!*

All. *What torment's exceeding, what joys are above,*
The pains and the pleasures that wait upon love.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Marble Portico, ornamented with Statues, which opens from Lord AIMWORTH'S *Houſe; two Chairs near the Front.*

Enter Lord AIMWORTH *reading.*

IN how contemptible a light would the ſituation I am now in ſhew me to moſt of the fine men of the preſent age? In love with a country girl; rivalled by a poor fellow, one of my meaneſt tenants, and uneaſy at it! If I had a mind to her, I know they would tell me, I ought to have taken care to make myſelf eaſy long ago, when I had her in my power. But I have the teſtimony of my own heart in my favour; and I think, was it to do again, I ſhould act as I have done. Let's ſee, what we have here? perhaps a book may compoſe my thoughts; [*reads and throws the book away*] it's to no purpoſe, I can't read, I can't think, I can't do any thing.

AIR.

Ah! how vainly mortals treaſure
Hopes of happineſs and pleaſure,
Hard and doubtful to obtain;
By what ſtandards falſe we meaſure:
Still purſuing
Ways to ruin,
Seeking bliſs, and finding pain.

SCENE II.

LORD AIMWORTH, PATTY.

Pat. Now comes the trial: no, my ſentence is already pronounc'd, and I will meet my fate with prudence and reſolution.

L. Aim.

L. Aim. Who's there?

Pat. My Lord!

L. Aim. Patty Fairfield!

Pat. I humbly beg pardon, my Lord, for preſſing ſo abruptly into your preſence; but I was told I might walk this way; and I am come by my father's commands to thank your Lordſhip for all your favours.

L. Aim. Favours, Patty! what favours? I have done you none: but why this metamorphoſis? I proteſt, if you had not ſpoke, I ſhould not have known you; I never ſaw you wear ſuch cloaths as theſe in my mother's life-time.

Pat. No, my Lord, it was her Ladyſhip's pleaſure I ſhould wear better, and therefore I obeyed; but it is now my duty to dreſs in a manner more ſuitable to my ſtation, and future proſpects in life.

L. Aim. I am afraid, Patty, you are too humble—come, ſit down—nay, I will have it ſo.—What is it I have been told to-day, Patty? It ſeems you are going to be married.

Pat. Yes, my Lord.

L. Aim. Well, and don't you think you could have made a better choice than farmer Giles? I ſhould imagine your perſon, your accompliſhments, might have intitled you to look higher.

Pat. Your Lordſhip is pleaſed to over-rate my little merit: the education I received in your family does not intitle me to forget my origin; and the farmer is my equal.

L. Aim. In what reſpect? The degrees of rank and fortune, my dear Patty, are arbitrary diſtinctions, unworthy the regard of thoſe who conſider juſtly; the true ſtandard of equality is ſeated in the mind: thoſe who think nobly are noble.

Pat. The farmer, my Lord, is a very honeſt man.

L. Aim. So he may: I don't ſuppoſe he would break into a houſe, or commit a robbery on the highway: what do you tell me of his honeſty for?

Pat. I did not mean to offend your Lordſhip.

L. Aim. Offend! I am not offended, Patty; not at

all

all offended——But is there any merit in a man's being honeſt?

Pat. I don't ſay there is, my Lord.

L. Aim. The farmer is an ill-bred, illiterate booby; and what happineſs can you propoſe to yourſelf in ſuch a ſociety?——Then, as to his perſon, I am ſure—But perhaps, Patty, you like him; and if ſo, I am doing a wrong thing.

Pat. Upon my word, my Lord———

L. Aim. Nay, I ſee you do: he has had the good fortune to pleaſe you; and in that caſe, you are certainly in the right to follow your inclinations.—I muſt tell you one thing, Patty, however—I hope you won't think it unfriendly of me——But I am determined farmer Giles ſhall not ſtay a moment on my eſtate, after next quarter-day.

Pat. I hope, my Lord, he has not incurred your diſpleaſure———

L. Aim. That's of no ſignification.—Could I find as many good qualities in him as you do, perhaps——But 'tis enough, he's a fellow I don't like; and as you have a regard for him, I would have you adviſe him to provide himſelf.

Pat. My Lord, I am very unfortunate.

L. Aim. She loves him, 'tis plain——Come, Patty, don't cry; I would not willingly do any thing to make you uneaſy.—Have you ſeen Miſs Sycamore yet?—I ſuppoſe you know ſhe and I are going to be married.

Pat. So I hear, my Lord.———Heaven make you both happy!

L. Aim. Thank you, Patty; I hope we ſhall be happy.

Pat. Upon my knees, upon my knees I pray it: may every earthly bliſs attend you! may your days prove an uninterrupted courſe of delightful tranquility; and your mutual friendſhip, confidence and love, end but with your lives!

L. Aim. Riſe, Patty, riſe; ſay no more—I ſuppoſe you'll wait upon Miſs Sycamore before you go away—

at

at preſent I have a little buſineſs——As I ſaid, Patty, don't afflict yourſelf: I have been ſomewhat haſty with regard to the farmer; but ſince I ſee how deeply you are intereſted in his affairs, I may poſſibly alter my deſigns with regard to him——You know—You know, Patty, your marriage with him is no concern of mine—I only ſpeak——

AIR.

My paſſion in vain I attempt to diſſemble;
Th' endeavour to hide it, but makes it appear:
Enraptur'd I gaze; when I touch her I tremble,
And ſpeak to and hear her, with falt'ring and fear.

By how many cruel ideas tormented!
My blood's in a ferment; it freezes, it burns:
This moment I wiſh, what the next is repented;
While love, rage, and jealouſy, rack me by turns.

SCENE III.

PATTY, GILES.

Giles. Miſs Pat—Odd rabbit it, I thought his honour was here; and I wiſh I may die if my heart did not jump into my mouth—Come, come down in all haſte, there's ſuch rig below as you never knew in your born days.

" *Pat.* Rig!—

" *Giles.* Ay, and fun"—There's as good as forty of the tenants, men and maidens, have got upon the lawn before the caſtle, with pipers and garlands; juſt for all the world as tho'f it was May-day; and the quality's looking at them out of the windows—'Tis as true as any thing; on account of my Lord's coming home with his new lady—" Look here, I have brought a ſtring of " flowers along with me."

Pat. Well, and what then?

Giles. Why I was thinking, if ſo be as you would come down, as we might take a dance together: little

Sal,

Sal, farmer Harrow's daughter, of the Green, would fain have had me for a partner; but I ſaid as how I'd go for one I liked better, one that I'd make a partner for life.

Pat. Did you ſay ſo?

Giles. Yes, and ſhe was ſtruck all of a heap——ſhe had not a word to throw to a dog—for Sal and I kept company once for a little bit.

Pat. Farmer, I am going to ſay ſomething to you, and I deſire you will liſten to it attentively. It ſeems you think of our being married together.

Giles. Think? why I think of nothing elſe; it's all over the place mun, as how you are to be my ſpouſe; and you would not believe what game folks make of me.

Pat. Shall I talk to you like a friend, farmer—— You and I were never deſigned for one another; and I am morally certain we ſhould not be happy.

Giles. Oh! as for that matter, I never has no words with nobody.

Pat. Shall I ſpeak plainer to you then—I don't like you.

Giles. No!

Pat. On the contrary, you are diſagreeable to me—

Giles. Am I!

Pat. Yes, of all things: I deal with you ſincerely.

Giles. Why, I thought, Miſs Pat, the affair between you and I was all fix'd and ſettled.

Pat. Well, let this undeceive you—Be aſſured we ſhall never be man and wife. No offer ſhall perſuade, no command force me.—You know my mind, make your advantage of it.

AIR.

Was I ſure a life to lead,
Wretched as the vileſt ſlave,
Every hardſhip would I brave;
Rudeſt toil, ſevereſt need;
Ere yield my hand ſo coolly,
To the man who never, truly,
Could my heart in keeping have.

Wealth

Wealth with others ſucceſs will inſure you,
Where your wit and your perſon may pleaſe;
Take to them your love, I conjure you,
And in mercy ſet me at eaſe.

SCENE IV.

GILES.

Here's a turn! I don't know what to make of it: ſhe's gone mad, that's for ſartin; wit and learning have crack'd her brain——Poor ſoul, poor ſoul——It is often the caſe of thoſe who have too much of them.—Lord, Lord, how ſorry I be—But hold, ſhe ſays I baint to her mind—mayn't all this be the effect of modiſh coyneſs, to do like the gentlewomen, becauſe ſhe was bred among them? And I have heard ſay, they will be upon their vixen tricks, till they go into the very church with a man. Icod there's nothing more likelier; for it is the cry of one and all, that ſhe's the moral of a lady in every thing: and our farmer's daughters, for the matter of that, tho'f they have nothing to boaſt of but a ſcrap of red ribbon about their hats, will have as many turnings and windings as a hare, before one can lay a faſt hold of them. There can no harm come of ſpeaking with Maſter Fairfield, however.—Odd rabbit it, how plaguy tart ſhe was—I am half vext with myſelf now that I let her go off ſo.

AIR.

When a maid, in way of marriage,
Firſt is courted by a man,
Let 'un do the beſt he can,
She's ſo ſhame-fac'd in her carriage,
'Tis with pain the ſuit's began.

Tho'f mayhap ſhe likes him mainly,
Still ſhe ſhams it coy and cold;
Fearing to confeſs it plainly,
Leſt the folks ſhould think her bold.

But

But the parſon comes in ſight,
Gives the word to bill and coo;
'Tis a different ſtory quite,
And ſhe quickly buckles too.

SCENE V.

Changes to a View of Lord AIMWORTH's *Houſe, and Improvements; a Seat under a Tree, and part of the Garden Wall, with a Chineſe Pavilion over it; ſeveral Country People appear dancing, others looking on; among whom are,* MERVIN, *diſguiſed,* RALPH, FANNY, *and a Numder of Gipſies. After the Dancers go off,* THEODOSIA *and* PATTY *enter through a Gate ſuppoſed to have a Connection with the principal Building.*

The. Well then, my dear Patty, you will run away from us: but why in ſuch a hurry, I have a thouſand things to ſay to you?

Pat. I ſhall do myſelf the honour to pay my duty to you ſome other time, Madam; at preſent I really find myſelf a little indiſpoſed.

The. Nay, I would by no means lay you under any reſtraint. But methinks the entertainment we have juſt been taking part of, ſhould have put you into better ſpirits: I am not in an over-merry mood myſelf, yet, I ſwear, I could not look on the diverſion of thoſe honeſt folks, without feeling a certain *gaieté de cœur.*

Pat. Why indeed, madam, it had one circumſtance attending it, which is often wanting to more polite amuſements; that of ſeeming to give undiſſembled ſatisfaction to thoſe who were engaged in it.

The. Oh, infinite, infinite! to ſee the chearful, healthy looking creatures, toil with ſuch a good will! To me there were more genuine charms in their aukward ſtumping and jumping about, their rude meaſures, and homeſpun finery, than in all the dreſs, ſplendor, and ſtudied graces, of a birth-night ball-room.

Pat. 'Tis a very uncommon declaration to be made by a fine lady, madam: but certainly, however the artful delicacies of high life may dazzle and ſurprize, nature has particular attractions, even in a cottage, her moſt unadorned ſtate, which ſeldom fail to affect us, tho' we can ſcarce give a reaſon for it.

The. But you know, Patty, I was always a diſtracted admirer of the country; no damſel in romance was ever fonder of groves and purling ſtreams: had I been born in the days of Arcadia, with my preſent propenſity, inſtead of being a fine lady, as you call me, I ſhould certainly have kept a flock of ſheep.

Pat. Well, madam, you have the ſages, poets, and philoſophers, of all ages, to countenance your way of thinking.

The. And you, my little philoſophical friend, don't you think me in the right too?

Pat. Yes, indeed, madam, perfectly.

AIR.

Truſt me, would you taſte true pleaſure,
Without mixture, without meaſure,
No where ſhall you find the treaſure
Sure as in the ſyl-van ſcene.

Bleſt, who, no falſe glare requiring,
Nature's rural ſweets admiring,
Can, from groſſer joys retiring,
Seek the ſimple and ſerene.

SCENE VI.

THEODOSIA, MERVIN, FANNY.

Mer. Yonder ſhe is ſeated; and, to my wiſh, moſt fortunately alone. Accoſt her as I deſired.

The. Heigh!

Fan. Heaven bleſs you, my ſweet lady—bleſs your honour's beautiful viſage, and ſend you a good huſband, and a great many of them.

The. A very comfortable wiſh upon my word: who are you, child?

Fan. A poor gipſey, an' pleaſe you, that goes about

begging from charitable gentlemen and ladies—If you have ere a coal or a bit of whiting in your pocket, I'll write you the firſt letter of your ſweetheart's name; how many huſbands you will have; and how many children, my lady: or, if you'll let me look at your line of life, I'll tell you whether it will be long or ſhort, happy or miſerable.

The. Oh! as for that, I know it already—you cannot tell me any good fortune, and therefore I'll hear none. Go about your buſineſs.

Mer. Stay, [madam, ſtay, [*Pretending to lift a paper from the ground.*] you have dropt ſomething—Fan, call the young gentlewoman back.

Fan. Lady, you have loſt——

The. Pho, pho, I have loſt nothing.

Mer. Yes, that paper, lady; you dropt it as you got up from the chair.—Fan, give it to her honour.

The. A letter with my addreſs! [*Takes the paper and reads.*] "Dear Theodoſia! Though the ſight of me "was ſo diſagreeable to you, that you charged me "never to approach you more, I hope my hand-wri- "ting can have nothing to frighten or diſguſt you. I "am not far off; and the perſon who delivers you "this, can give you intelligence."——Come hither, child: do you know any thing of the gentleman that wrote this?

Fan. My Lady——

The. Make haſte, run this moment, bring me to him, bring him to me; ſay I wait with impatience; tell him I will go, fly any where——

Mer. My life, my charmer!

The. Oh, Heavens!——Mr. Mervin!

SCENE VII.

THEODOSIA, MERVIN, SIR HARRY, LADY SYCAMORE, FANNY, GIPSIES.

L. Syc. Sir Harry, don't walk ſo faſt, we are not running for a wager.

S. Har. Hough, hough, hough.

L. Syc. Hey day, you have got a cough; I ſhall have you laid upon my hands preſently.

S. Har. No, no, my lady, it's only the old affair.

L. Syc. Come here, and let me tye this handkerchief about your neck; you have put yourſelf into a muck ſweat already. [*Ties a handkerchief about his neck.*] Have you taken your Bardana this morning? I warrant you not now, though you have been complaining of twitches two or three times; and you know the gouty ſeaſon is coming on. Why will you be ſo neglectful of your health, Sir Harry? I proteſt I am forced to watch you like an infant.

S. Har. My lovey takes care of me, and I am obliged to her.

L. Syc. Well, but you ought to mind me then, ſince you are ſatisfied I never ſpeak but for your good.—I thought, Miſs Sycamore, you were to have followed your papa and me into the garden.—How far did you go with that wench?

The. They are gipſies, madam, they ſay. Indeed I don't know what they are.

L. Syc. I wiſh Miſs, you would learn to give a rational anſwer.——

S. Har. Eh! what's that? gipſies! Have we gipſies here? Vagrants, that pretend to a knowledge of future events; diviners, fortune-tellers?

Fan. Yes, your worſhip, we'll tell your fortune, or her Ladyſhip's, for a crum of bread, or a little broken victuals: what you throw to your dogs, an pleaſe you.

S. Har. Broken victuals, huſſey! How do you think we ſhould have broken victuals?—If we are at home, indeed, perhaps you might get ſome ſuch thing from the cook: but here we are only on a viſit to a friend's houſe, and have nothing to do with the kitchen at all.

L. Syc. And do you think, Sir Harry, it is neceſſary to give the creature an account.

S. Har. No, love, no; but what can you ſay to obſtinate people?——Get you gone, bold face.—I once knew a merchant's wife in the city, my lady, who had her fortune told by ſome of thoſe gipſies. They ſaid ſhe ſhould die at ſuch a time; and I warrant, as ſure as

the day came, the poor gentlewoman actually died with the conceit.——Come, Doſſy, your mamma and I are going to take a walk.——My lady, will you have hold of my arm?

L. Syc. No, Sir Harry, I chooſe to go by myſelf.

Mer. Now, love, aſſiſt me—[*Turning to the gipſies.*] Follow and take all your cues from me——Nay, but good lady and gentleman, you won't go without remembering the poor gipſies.

S. Har. Hey! here is all the gang after us.

Gip. Pray, your noble honour.

L. Syc. Come back in the garden; we ſhall be covered with vermin.

Gip. Out of the bowels of your commiſeration.

L. Syc. They preſs upon us more and more; yet that girl has no mind to leave them: I ſhall ſwoon away.

S. Har. Don't be frighten'd, my lady; let me advance.

AIR.

You vile pack of vagabonds, what do you mean?
I'll maul you raſcallions,
Ye tatter-demallions——
If one of you come within reach of my cane.
Such curſed aſſurance,
'Tis paſt all endurance.
Nay, nay, pray come away.
They're lyars and thieves,
And he that believes
Their fooliſh predictions,
Will find them but fictions,
A bubble that always deceives.

SCENE VIII.

MERVIN, THEODOSIA, FANNY, GIPSIES.

Fan. Oh! mercy, dear—The gentleman is ſo bold, 'tis well if he does not bring us into trouble. Who knows but this may be a juſtice of peace! and ſee, he's following them into the garden!

1ſt Gip. Well, 'tis all your ſeeking, Fan.

Fan. We ſhall have warrants to take us up, I'll be hang'd elſe. We had better run away, the ſervants will come out with ſticks to lick us.

Mer.

Mer. Curſed ill fortune—[*Here Mervin returns with gipſies.*]—She's gone, and, perhaps, I ſhall not have another opportunity—And you, ye blundering block-head, I won't give you a halfpenny——Why did you not clap too the garden door, when I called to you, before the young lady got in? The key was on the outſide, which would have given me ſome time for an explanation.

2d Gip. An pleaſe your honour I was dubus.

Mer. Dubus! plague choak ye——However, it is ſome ſatisfaction that I have been able to let her ſee me, and know where I am [*Turning to the gipſies, who go off.*] ——Go, get you gone, all of you, about your buſineſs.

The. Diſappeared, fled! [*Theodoſia appears in the pavilion.*]--Oh, how unlucky this is!—Could he not have patience to wait a moment?

Mer. I know not what to reſolve on.

The. Hem!

Mer. I'll go back to the garden-door.

The. Mr. Mervin!

Mer. What do I ſee!—'Tis ſhe, 'tis ſhe herſelf!—Oh, Theodoſia!—Shall I climb the wall and come up to you?

The. No; ſpeak ſoftly: Sir Harry and my Lady ſit below at the end of the walk—How much am I obliged to you for taking this trouble.

Mer. When their happineſs is at ſtake, what is it men will not attempt?—Say but you love me.

The. What proof would you have me give you?—I know but of one: if you pleaſe I am willing to go off with you.

Mer. Are you!—Would to Heaven I had brought a carriage!

The. How did you come?—Have you not horſes?

Mer. No; there's another misfortune.——To avoid ſuſpicion, there being but one little public-houſe in the village, I diſpatched my ſervant with them, about an hour ago, to wait for me at a town twelve miles diſtant, whither I pretended to go; but alighting a mile off, I equipt myſelf, and came back as you ſee: neither can we, nearer than this town, get a poſt-chaiſe.

The. You ſay you have made a confidant of the miller's ſon:—return to your place of rendezvous:—my father has been aſked this moment, by Lord Aimworth, who is in the garden, to take a walk with him down to the Mill: they will go before dinner; and it ſhall be hard if I cannot contrive to be one of the company.

Mer. And what then———

The. Why, in the mean time, you may deviſe ſome method to carry me from hence: and I'll take care you ſhall have an opportunity of communicating it to me.

Mer. Well, but dear Theodoſia———

AIR.

The. *Hiſt, hiſt! I hear my mother call——*
Pr'ythee be gone;
We'll meet anon:
Catch this, and this——
Blow me a kiſs
In pledge of promis'd truth, that's all.
Fare-wel!——and yet a moment ſtay;
Something beſide I had to ſay:——
Well, 'tis forgot?
No matter what———
Love grant us grace;
The mill's the place:
She calls again, I muſt away.

SCENE IX.

MERVIN, FANNY.

Fan. Pleaſe your honour, you were ſo kind as to ſay you would remember my fellow-travellers for their trouble: and they think I have gotten the money.

Mer. Oh, here; give them this—[*Gives her money.*] And for you, my dear little pilot, you have brought me ſo cleverly through my buſineſs, that I muſt——

Fan. Oh, Lord!—your honour—[*Mervin kiſſes her.*] Pray don't———kiſs me again.

Mer. Again, and again.———There's a thought come into my head.—Theodoſia will certainly have no objection to putting on the dreſs of a ſiſter of mine.—So, and ſo only we may eſcape to-night.—This girl,

girl, for a little money, will provide us with neceſſaries.———

Fan. Dear gracious! I warrant you, now, I am as red as my petticoat: why would you royſter and touzle one ſo?—If Ralph was to ſee you, he'd be as jealous as the vengeance.

Mer. Hang Ralph! never mind him.—There's a guinea for thee.

Fan. What, a golden guinea?———

Mer. Yes; and if thou art a good girl, and do as I deſire thee, thou ſha't have twenty.

Fan. Ay, but not all gold.

Mer. As good as that is.

Fan. Shall I though, if I does as you bids me?

Mer. You ſhall.

Fan. Precious heart! He's a ſweet gentleman!—Icod I have a great mind———

Mer. What art thou thinking about?

Fan. Thinking, your honour?—Ha, ha, ha!

Mer. Indeed, ſo merry.

Fan. I don't know what I am thinking about, not I—Ha, ha, ha!—Twenty guineas!

Mer. I tell thee thou ſhalt have them.

Fan. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Mer. By Heaven I am ſerious.

Fan. Ha, ha, ha!—Why then I'll do whatever your honour pleaſes.

Mer. Stay here a little, to ſee that all keeps quiet; you'll find me preſently at the mill, where we'll talk farther.

AIR.

Yes, 'tis decreed, thou maid divine!
I muſt, I will poſſeſs thee:
Oh, what delight within my arms to preſs thee!
To kiſs, and call thee mine!
Let me this only bliſs enjoy;
That ne'er can waſte, that ne'er can cloy:
All other pleaſures I reſign.
Why ſhould we dally;
Stand ſhilli ſhally:

Let

Let fortune ſmile or frown;
Love will attend us;
Love will befriend us;
And all our wiſhes crown.

SCENE X.

FANNY, RALPH.

Fan. What a dear kind ſoul he is—Here comes Ralph—I can tell him, unleſs he makes me his lawful wife, as he has often ſaid he would, the devil a word more ſhall he ſpeak to me.

Ral. So, Fan, where's the gentleman?

Fan. How ſhould I know where he is; what do you aſk me for?

Ral. There's no harm in putting a civil queſtion, be there? Why you look as croſs and ill-natured——

Fan. Well, mayhap I do—and mayhap I have where-withal for it.

Ral. Why, has the gentleman offered any thing uncivil? Ecod, I'd try a bout as ſoon as look at him.

Fan. He offer—no—he's a gentleman every inch of him; but you are ſenſible, Ralph, you have been promiſing me, a great while, this, and that, and t'other; and, when all comes to all, I don't ſee but you are like the reſt of them.

Ral. Why, what is it I have promiſed?

Fan. To marry me in the church, you have, a hundred times.

Ral. Well, and mayhap I will, if you'll have patience.

Fan. Patience! me no patience; you may do it now if you pleaſe.

Ral. Well, but ſuppoſe I don't pleaſe? I tell you, Fan, you're a fool, and want to quarrel with your bread and butter; I have had anger enow from feyther already upon your account, and you want me to come by more. As I ſaid, if you have patience, mayhap things may fall out, and mayhap not.

Fan. With all my heart, then; and now I know your mind, you may go hang yourſelf.

Ral. Ay, ay,

Fan.

Fan. Yes, you may—who cares for you?

Ral. Well, and who cares for you, an you go to that?

Fan. A menial feller—Go mind your mill and your drudgery; I don't think you worthy to wipe my ſhoes —feller.

Ral. Nay, but Fan, keep a civil tongue in your head: odds fleſh! I would fain know what fly bites all of a ſudden now.

Fan. Marry come up, the beſt gentlemen's ſons in the country have made me proffers; and if one is a miſs, be a miſs to a gentleman, I ſay, that will give one fine cloaths, and take one to ſee the ſhow, and put money in one's pocket.

Ral. Whu, whu—[*Hits him a ſlap.*] What's that for?

Fan. What do you whiſtle for, then? Do you think I am a dog?

Ral. Never from me, Fan, if I have not a mind to give you, with this ſwitch in my hand here, as good a lacing———

Fan. Touch me, if you dare: touch me, and I'll ſwear my life againſt you.

Ral. A murrain! with her damn'd little fiſt as hard as ſhe could draw.

Fan. Well, it's good enough for you; I'm not neceſſitated to take up with the impudence of ſuch a low-lived monkey as you are.——A gentleman's my friend, and I can have twenty guineas in my hand, all as good as this is.

Ral. Belike from this Londoner, eh?

Fan. Yes, from him—ſo you may take your promiſe of marriage; I don't value it that—[*ſpits*] and if you ſpeak to me I'll ſlap your chops again.

AIR.

Lord, Sir, you ſeem mighty uneaſy;
But I the refuſal can bear:
I warrant I ſhall not run crazy,
Nor die in a fit of deſpair.
If ſo you ſuppoſe, you're miſtaken;
For, Sir, for to let you to know,
I'm not ſuch a maiden forſaken,
But I have two ſtrings to my bow.

SCENE XI.

RALPH.

Indeed! Now I'll be judg'd by any ſoul living in the world, if ever there was a viler piece of treachery than this here; there is no ſuch thing as a true friend upon the face of the globe, and ſo I have ſaid a hundred times! A couple of baſe deceitful——after all my love and kindneſs ſhewn! Well, I'll be revenged; ſee an I be'nt——Marſter Marvint, that's his name, an he do not ſham it: he has come here and diſguiſed unſelf; whereof 'tis contrary to law ſo to do: beſides, I do partly know why he did it; and I'll fiſh out the whole conjuration, and go up to the caſtle and tell every ſyllable; a ſhan't carry a wench from me, were he twenty times the mon he is, and twenty times to that again; and moreover than ſo, the firſt time I meet un, I'll knock un down, tho'f 'twas before my Lord himſelf; and he may capias me for it afterwards an he wull.

AIR.

As they count me ſuch a ninny,
So to let them rule the roaſt;
I'll bet any one a guinea
They have ſcor'd without their hoſt.
But if I don't ſhew him in lieu of it,
A trick that's fairly worth two of it,
Then let me paſs for a fool and an aſs.

To be ſure yon ſly cajoler
Thought the work as good as done,
When he found the little ſtroller
Was ſo eaſy to be won.
But if I don't ſhew him in lieu of it,
A trick that's fairly worth two of it,
Then let me paſs for a fool or an aſs.

SCENE XII.

Changes to a Room in the Mill; two Chairs, with a Table, and a Tankard of Beer.

FAIRFIELD, GILES.

Fai. In ſhort, farmer, I don't know what to ſay to thee,

thee. I have ſpoken to her all I can; but I think children were born to pull the grey hairs of their parents to the grave with ſorrow.

Giles. Nay, Maſter Fairfield, don't take on about it: belike Miſs Pat has another love: and if ſo, in Heaven's name be't: what's one man's meat, as the ſaying is, is another man's poiſon; and, tho'f ſome might find me well enough to their fancy, ſet in caſe I don't ſuit her's, why there's no harm done.

Fai. Well but, neighbour, I have put that to her; and the ſtory is, ſhe has no inclination to marry any one; all ſhe deſires, is, to ſtay at home and take care of me.

Giles. Maſter Fairfield——here's towards your good health.

Fai. Thank thee, friend Giles—and here's towards thine.—I promiſe thee, had things gone as we propoſed, thou ſhould'ſt have had one half of what I was worth, to the uttermoſt farthing.

Giles. Why to be ſure, Maſter Fairfield, I am not the leſs obligated to your good-will; but, as to that matter, had I married, it ſhould not have been for the lucre of gain; but if I do like a girl, do you ſee, I do like her; ay, and I'd take her, ſaving reſpect, if ſhe had not a ſecond petticoat.

Fai. Well ſaid—where love is, with a little induſtry, what have a young couple to be afraid of? And, by the Lord Harry, for all that's paſt, I cannot help thinking we ſhall bring our matters to bear yet—Young women you know, friend Giles——

Giles. Why, that's what I have been thinking with myſelf, Maſter Fairfield.

Fai. Come, then, mend thy draught.—Duce take me if I let it drop ſo—But, in any caſe, don't you go to make yourſelf uneaſy.

Giles. Uneaſy, Maſter Fairfield; what good would that do?—For ſartin, ſeeing how things were, I ſhould have been very glad they had gone accordingly; but if they change, 'tis no fault of mine you know.

AIR.

AIR.

Zooks! why ſhould I ſit down and grieve?
No caſe ſo hard, there mayn't be had
Some med'cine to relieve.

Here's what maſters all diſaſters:
With a cup of nut-brown beer,
Thus my drooping thoughts I cheer:
If one pretty damſel fail me,
From another I may find
Return more kind;
What a murrain then ſhould ail me!
All girls are not of a mind.

He's a child that whimpers for a toy;
So here's to thee, honeſt boy.

SCENE XIII.

FAIRFIELD, LORD AIMWORTH.

Fai. O the goodneſs, his Lordſhip's honour—you are come into a litter'd place, my noble Sir—the arm-chair———will it pleaſe your honour to repoſe you on this, till a better———

L. Aim. Thank you, miller, there's no occaſion for either.———I only want to ſpeak a few words to you, and have company waiting for me without.

Fai. Without———won't their honours favour my poor hovel ſo far———

L. Aim. No, miller, let them ſtay where they are.—I find you are about marrying your daughter—I know the great regard my mother had for her; and am ſatisfied, that nothing but her ſudden death could have prevented her leaving her a handſome proviſion.

Fai. Dear, my Lord, your noble mother, you, and all your family, have heaped favours on favours on my poor child.

L. Aim. Whatever has been done for her ſhe has fully merited———

Fai. Why, to be ſure, my Lord, ſhe is a very good girl.

L. Aim. Poor old man—but thoſe are tears of ſatisfaction.———Here, Maſter Fairfield, to bring matters

to

to a ſhort concluſion, here is a bill of a thouſand pounds.——————Portion your daughter with what you think convenient of it.

Fai. A thouſand pounds, my Lord! Pray excuſe me; excuſe me, worthy Sir; too much has been done already, and we have no pretenſions——————

L. Aim. I inſiſt upon your taking it.——Put it up, and ſay no more.

Fai. Well, my Lord, if it muſt be ſo: but indeed, indeed——————

L. Aim. In this I only fulfil what I am ſatisfied would pleaſe my mother. As to myſelf, I ſhall take upon me all the expences of Patty's wedding, and have already given orders about it.

Fai. Alas, Sir, you are too good, too generous; but I fear we ſhall not be able to profit of your kind intentions, unleſs you will condeſcend to ſpeak a little to Patty.

L. Aim. How ſpeak!

Fai. Why, my Lord, I thought we had pretty well ordered all things concerning this marriage; but all on a ſudden the girl has taken it into her head not to have the farmer, and declares ſhe will never marry at all.——But I know, my Lord, ſhe'll pay great reſpect to any thing you ſay: and if you'll but lay your commands on her to marry him, I'm ſure ſhe'll do it.

L. Aim. Who, I lay my commands on her?

Fai. Yes, pray, my Lord, do; I'll ſend her in to you.

L. Aim. "Maſter Fairfield, [*Fairfield goes out and returns.*]—What can be the meaning of this?—Refuſe to marry the farmer!—How, why?—My heart is thrown in an agitation; while every ſtep I take ſerves but to lead me into new perplexities.

Fai. "She's coming, my Lord; I ſaid you were here;" and I humbly beg you will tell her, you inſiſt upon the match going forward; tell her, you inſiſt upon it, my Lord, and ſpeak a little angrily to her.

SCENE XIV.

LORD AIMWORTH, PATTY.

L. Aim. I came hither, Patty, in conſequence of our

converſation this morning, to render your change of ſtate as agreeable and happy as I could: but your father tells me, you have fallen out with the farmer? has any thing happened, ſince I ſaw you laſt, to alter your good opinion of him?

Pat. No, my Lord, I am in the ſame opinion with regard to the farmer now as I always was.

L. Aim. I thought, Patty, you loved him, you told me———

Pat. My Lord!

L. Aim. Well, no matter—Poſſibly your affections are engaged elſewhere: let me but know the man that can make you happy, and I ſwear———

Pat. Indeed, my Lord, you take too much trouble upon my account.

L. Aim. Perhaps, Patty, you love ſomebody ſo much beneath you, you are aſhamed to own it; but your eſteem confers a value whereſoever it is placed. I was too harſh with you this morning: our inclinations are not in our own power; they maſter the wiſeſt of us.

Pat. Pray, pray my Lord, talk not to me in this ſtile: conſider me as one deſtined by birth and fortune to the meaneſt condition and offices; who has unhappily been apt to imbibe ſentiments contrary to them! Let me conquer a heart, where pride and vanity have uſurped an improper rule; and learn to know myſelf, of whom I have been too long ignorant.

L. Aim. Perhaps, Patty, you love ſome one ſo much above you, you are afraid to own it——If ſo, be his rank what it will, he is to be envied: for the love of a woman of virtue, beauty, and ſentiment, does honour to a monarch.——What means that downcaſt look, thoſe tears, thoſe bluſhes? Dare you not confide in me?—Do you think, Patty, you have a friend in the world would ſympathize with you more ſincerely than I?

Pat. What ſhall I anſwer?—No, my Lord, you have ever treated me with a kindneſs, a generoſity of which none but minds like your's are capable: you have been my inſtructor, my adviſer, my protector; but, my Lord, you have been too good: when our ſuperiors forget the

diſtance

diſtance between us, we are ſometimes led to forget it too: had you been leſs condeſcending, perhaps I had been happier.

L. Aim. And have I, Patty, have I made you unhappy: I, who would ſacrifice my own felicity, to ſecure your's?

Pat. I beg, my Lord, you will ſuffer me to be gone: only believe me ſenſible of all your favours, though unworthy of the ſmalleſt.

L. Aim. How unworthy!—You merit every thing; my reſpect, my eſteem, my friendſhip, and my love! —Yes, I repeat, I avow it: your beauty, your modeſty, your underſtanding, have made a conqueſt of my heart.—But what a world do we live in! that, while I own this; while I own a paſſion for you, founded on the juſteſt, the nobleſt baſis, I muſt at the ſame time confeſs, the fear of that world, its taunts, its reproaches—

Pat. Ah, Sir, think better of the creature you have raiſed, than to ſuppoſe I ever entertained a hope tending to your diſhonour: would that be a return for the favours I have received? Would that be a grateful reverence for the memory of her——Pity and pardon the diſturbance of a mind that fears to enquire too minutely into its own ſenſations.——I am unfortunate, my Lord, but not criminal.

L. Aim. Patty, we are both unfortunate: for my own part, I know not what to ſay to you, or what to propoſe to myſelf.

Pat. Then, my Lord, 'tis mine to act as I ought: yet, while I am honoured with a place in your eſteem, imagine me not inſenſible of ſo high a diſtinction; or capable of lightly turning my thoughts towards another.

L. Aim. How cruel is my ſituation!——I am here, Patty, to command you to marry the man who has given you ſo much uneaſineſs.

Pat. My Lord, I am convinced it is for your credit and my ſafety, it ſhould be ſo: I hope I have not ſo ill profited by the leſſons of your noble mother, but I ſhall be able to do my duty, whenever I am called to it: this will be my firſt ſupport; time and reflection will complete the work.

AIR.

Ceaſe, oh ceaſe, to overwhelm me,
With exceſs of bounty rare;
What am I? What have I? Tell me,
To deſerve your meaneſt care?
'Gainſt our fate in vain's reſiſtance,
Let me then no grief diſcloſe;
But reſign'd, at humble diſtance,
Offer vows for your repoſe.

SCENE XV.

Lord AIMWORTH, PATTY, *Sir* HARRY SYCAMORE, THEODOSIA, GILES.

S. Har. No juſtice of peace, no bailiffs, no headborough!

L. Aim. What's the matter, Sir Harry?

S. Har. The matter, my Lord—While I was examining the conſtruction of the mill without, for I have ſome ſmall notion of mechanics, Miſs Sycamore had like to have been run away with by a gipſey man.

The. Dear papa, how can you talk ſo? Did not I tell you it was at my own deſire the poor fellow went to ſhew me the canal.

S. Har. Hold your tongue, miſs. I don't know any buſineſs you had to let him come near you at all: we have ſtayed ſo long too; your mamma gave us but half an hour, and ſhe'll be frightened out of her wits—ſhe'll think ſome accident has happened to me.

L. Aim. I'll wait upon you when you pleaſe.

S. Har. O! but my Lord, here's a poor fellow; it ſeems his miſtreſs has conceived ſome diſguſt againſt him: pray has her father ſpoke to you to interpoſe your authority in his behalf?

Giles. If his Lordſhip's honour would be ſo kind, I would acknowledge the favour as far as in me lay.

S. Har. Let me ſpeak—[*Takes Lord Aimworth aſide*] a word or two in your Lordſhip's ear.

The. Well, I do like this gipſey ſcheme prodigiouſly, if we can but put it into execution as happily as we have contrived it.—[*here Patty enters*] So, my dear Patty, you

ſee

ſee I am come to return your viſit very ſoon; but this is only a call *en paſſant*—will you be at home after dinner?

Pat. Certainly, madam, whenever you condeſcend to honour me ſo far; but it is what I cannot expect.

The. O fye, why not———

Giles. Your ſervant, Miſs Patty.

Pat. Farmer, your ſervant.

S. Har. Here you goodman delver, I have done your buſineſs; my Lord has ſpoke, and your fortune's made: a thouſand pounds at preſent, and better things to come; his Lordſhip ſays he will be your friend.

Giles. I do hope, then, Miſs Pat will make all up.

S. Har. Miſs Pat, make up! ſtand out of the way, I'll make it up.

The quarrels of lovers, adds me! they're a jeſt;
Come hither, ye blockhead, come hither:
So now let us leave them together.

L. Aim. *Farewell, then!*
Pat. ———*For ever!*
Giles. ———*I vow and proteſt,*
'Twas kind of his honour,
To gain thus upon her;
We're ſo much beholden it can't be expreſt,
The. *I feel ſomething here,*
'Twixt hoping and fear:
Haſte, haſte, friendly night,
To ſhelter our flight——

L. Aim. } *A thouſand diſtractions are rending my breaſt.*
Pat. }

Pat. *O mercy,*
Giles. ———*Oh dear!*
S. Har. *Why Miſs, will you mind when you're ſpoke to, or not?*
Muſt I ſtand in waiting,
While you're here a prating?

L. Aim. } *May ev'ry felicity fall to your lot.*
The. }

Giles. *She curtſies!—Look there,*
What a ſhape, what an air!—
All. *How happy, how wretched! how tir'd am I!*
Your Lordſhip's obedient; your ſervant; good bye.

ACT III. SCENE I.

The Portico to Lord AIMWORTH's *Houſe.*

Enter Lord AIMWORTH, *Sir* HARRY, *Lady* SYCAMORE.

Lady Sycamore.

A Wretch! a vile, inconſiderate wretch! coming of ſuch a race as mine; and having an example like me before her!

L. Aim. I beg, madam, you will not diſquiet yourſelf: you are told here, that a gentleman lately arrived from London has been about the place to-day; that he has diſguiſed himſelf like a gipſey, came hither, and had ſome converſation with your daughter; you are even told, that there is a deſign formed for their going off together; but poſſibly there may be ſome miſtake in all this.

S. Har. Ay, but my Lord, the lad tells us the gentleman's name; we have ſeen the gipſies; and we know ſhe has had a hankering———

L. Syc. Sir Harry, my dear, why will you put in your word, when you hear others ſpeaking—I proteſt, my Lord, I'm in ſuch confuſion, I know not what to ſay: I can hardly ſupport myſelf.———

L. Aim. This gentleman, it ſeems, is at a little inn at the bottom of the hill.

S. Har. I wiſh it was poſſible to have a file of muſqueteers, my Lord; I could head them myſelf, being in the militia: and we would go and ſeize him directly.

L. Aim. Softy, my dear Sir; let us proceed with a little leſs violence in this matter, I beſeech you. We ſhould firſt ſee the young lady——Where is Miſs Sycamore, madam?

L. Syc. Really, my Lord, I don't know; I ſaw her go into the garden about a quarter of an hour ago, from our chamber window.

S. Har. Into the garden! perhaps ſhe has got an inkling of our being informed of this affair, and is gone to throw herſelf into the pond. Deſpair, my Lord, makes girls do terrible things. 'Twas but the

Wedneſday

Wedneſday before we left London, that I ſaw, taken out of Roſamond's pond, in Saint James's Park, as likely a young woman as ever you would deſire to ſet your eyes on, in a new callimanco petticoat, and a pair of ſilver buckles in her ſhoes.

L. Aim. I hope there is no danger of any ſuch fatal accident happening at preſent; but will you oblige me, Sir Harry?

S. Har. Surely, my Lord——

L. Aim. Will you commit the whole direction of this affair to my prudence?

S. Har. My dear, you hear what his Lordſhip ſays.

L. Syc. Indeed, my Lord, I am ſo much aſham'd, I don't know what to anſwer; the fault of my daughter.—

L. Aim. Don't mention it, madam; the fault has been mine, who have been innocently the occaſion of a young lady's tranſgreſſing a point of duty and decorum, which, otherwiſe, ſhe would never have violated. But if you, and Sir Harry, will walk in and repoſe yourſelves, I hope to ſettle every thing to the general ſatisfaction.

L. Syc. Come in, Sir Harry. [*Exit.*

L. Aim. I am ſure, my good friend, had I known that I was doing a violence to Miſs Sycamore's inclinations, in the happineſs I propoſed to myſelf——

S. Har. My Lord, 'tis all a caſe——My grandfather, by the mother's ſide, was a very ſenſible man—he was elected knight of the ſhire in five ſucceſſive parliaments; and died high ſheriff of his county—a man of fine parts, fine talents, and one of the moſt curioſeſt docker of horſes in all England (but that he did only now and then for his amuſement)——And he uſed to ſay, my Lord, that the female ſex were good for nothing but to bring forth children, and breed diſturbance.

L. Aim. The ladies were very little obliged to your anceſtor, Sir Harry; but for my part, I have a more favourable opinion——

S. Har. You are in the wrong, my Lord; with ſubmiſſion, you are really in the wrong.

AIR.

AIR.

To ſpeak my mind of woman kind,
In one word 'tis this;
By nature they're deſign'd,
To ſay and do amiſs.

Be they maids, be they wives,
Alike they plague our lives:
Wanton, headſtrong, cunning, vain,
Born to cheat, and give men pain.

Their ſtudy day and night,
Is miſchief, their delight:
And if we ſhould prevent,
At one door their intent;
They quickly turn about,
And find another out.

SCENE II.

"*Lord* AIMWORTH," *Enter* FAIRFIELD, "RALPH."

"*Ral.* Dear goodneſs, my Lord, I doubts I have "done ſome wrong here; I hope your honour will for- "give me; to be ſartin, if I had known———

"*L. Aim.* You have done nothing but what's very "right, my lad; don't make yourſelf uneaſy."—How now, Maſter Fairfield, what brings you here?

Fai. I am come, my Lord, to thank you for your bounty to me and my daughter this morning, and moſt humbly to intreat your Lordſhip to receive it at our hands again.

L. Aim. Ay—why, what's the matter?

Fai. I don't know, my Lord; it ſeems your generoſity to my poor girl has been noiſed about the neighbourhood; and ſome evil-minded people have put it into the young man's head, that was to marry her, that you would never have made her a preſent ſo much above her deſerts and expectations, if it had not been upon ſome naughty account: now, my Lord, I am a poor man, 'tis true, and a mean one; but I and my father, and my father's father, have lived tenants upon your Lordſhip's eſtate, where we have always been

known

known for honeſt men; and it ſhall never be ſaid, that Fairfield, the miller, became rich in his old days by the wages of his child's ſhame.

L. Aim. What then, Maſter Fairfield, do you believe———

Fai. No, my Lord, no, Heaven forbid; but when I conſider the ſum, it is too much for us; "it is indeed, "my Lord," and enough to make bad folks talk: beſides, my poor girl is greatly alter'd; ſhe us'd to be the life of every place ſhe came into; but ſince her being at home, I have ſeen nothing from her but ſadneſs and watery eyes.

L. Aim. The farmer then refuſes to marry Patty, notwithſtanding their late reconciliation.

Fai. Yes, my Lord, he does indeed; and has made a wicked noiſe, and uſed us in a very baſe manner: I did not think farmer Giles would have been ſo ready to believe ſuch a thing of us.

L. Aim. Well, Maſter Fairfield, I will not preſs on you a donation, the rejection of which does you ſo much credit; you may take my word, however, that your fears upon this occaſion are entirely groundleſs: but this is not enough, as I have been the means of loſing your daughter one huſband, it is but juſt I ſhould get her another; and, ſince the farmer is ſo ſcrupulous, there is a young man in the houſe here, whom I have ſome influence over, and I dare ſay he will be leſs ſqueamiſh.

Fai. To be ſure, my Lord, you have, in all honeſt ways, a right to diſpoſe of me and mine, as you think proper.

L. Aim. Go then immediately, and bring Patty hither; I ſhall not be eaſy till I have given you entire ſatisfaction. But, ſtay and take a letter, which I am ſtepping into my ſtudy to write: I'll order a chaiſe to be got ready, that you may go back and forward with greater expedition.

AIR.

Let me fly———hence tyrant faſhion,
Teach to ſervile minds your law;
Curb in them each gen'rous paſſion,
Ev'ry motion keep in awe. *Shall*

Shall I, in thy trammels going,
Quit the idol of my heart?
While it beats, all fervent, glowing!
With my life I'll ſooner part.

SCENE III.

FANNY *following* RALPH.

Fan. Ralph, Ralph!

Ral. What do you want with me, eh?

Fan. Lord, I never knowed ſuch a man as you are, ſince I com'd into the world; a body can't ſpeak to you, but you falls ſtrait ways into a paſſion: I followed you up from the houſe, only you run ſo, there was no ſuch a thing as overtaking you, and I have been waiting there at the back door ever ſo long.

Ral. Well, and now you may go wait at the fore door, if you like it: but I forewarn you and your gang not to keep lurking about our mill any longer; for if you do, I'll ſend the conſtable after you, and have you, every mother's ſkin, clapt into the county gaol, you are ſuch a pack of thieves, one can't hang ſo much as a rag to dry for you: it was but the other day that a couple of them came into our kitchen to beg a handful of dirty flour to make them cakes, and before the wench could turn about, they had whipped off three braſs candleſticks, and a pot-lid.

Fan. Well, ſure it was not I.

Ral. Then you know that old raſcal, that you call father; the laſt time I catch'd him laying ſnares for the hares, I told him I'd inform the game-keeper, and I'll expoſe all———

Fan. Ah, dear Ralph, don't be angry with me.

Ral. Yes I will be angry with you—what do you come nigh me for?—You ſhan't touch me—There's the ſkirt of my coat, and if you do but lay a finger on it, my Lord's bailiff is here in the court, and I'll call him and give you to him.

Fan. If you'll forgive me, I'll go down on my knees.

Ral. I tell you I won't.—No, no, follow your gentleman;

tleman; or go live upon your old fare, crows and polecats, and ſheep that die of the rot; pick the dead fowl off the dung-hills, and ſquench your thirſt at the next ditch, 'tis the fitteſt liquor to waſh down ſuch dainties —ſkulking about from barn to barn, and lying upon wet ſtraw, on commons, and in green lanes—go and be whipt from pariſh to pariſh, as you uſed to be.

Fan. How can you talk ſo unkind?

Ral. And ſee whether you will get what will keep you as I did, by telling of fortunes, and coming with pillows under your apron, among the young farmers wives, to make believe you are a breeding, with "the Lord Almighty bleſs you, ſweet miſtreſs, you cannot tell how ſoon it may be your own caſe." You know I am acquainted with all your tricks—and how you turn up the whites of your eyes, pretending you were ſtruck blind by thunder and lightning.

Fan. Pray don't be angry, Ralph.

Ral. Yes but I will tho'; ſpread your cobwebs to catch flies, I am an old waſp, and don't value them a button.

AIR.

When you meet a tender creature,
Neat in limb, and fair in feature,
Full of kindneſs and good-nature,
Prove as kind again to ſhe;
Happy mortal! to poſſeſs her,
In your boſom, warm, and preſs her,
Morning, noon, and night, careſs her,
And be fond, as fond can be.

But if one you meet that's froward,
Saucy, jilting, and untoward,
Should you act the whining coward,
'Tis to mend her ne'er the whit:
Nothing's tough enough to bind;
Then agog, when once you find her,
Let her go and never mind her:
Heart alive, you're fairly quit.

SCENE

SCENE IV.

FANNY:

" I wiſh I had a draught of water. I don't know " what's come over me; I have no more ſtrength than " a babe; a ſtraw would fling me down."—He has a heart as hard as any pariſh-officer; I don't doubt now but he would ſtand by and ſee me himſelf; and we ſhall all be whipt, and all through my means.—The devil run away with the gentleman, and his twenty guineas too, for leading me aſtray: if I had known Ralph would have taken it ſo, I would have hanged myſelf before I would have ſaid a word—but I thought he had no more gall than a pigeon.

AIR.

O! what a ſimpleton was I,
To make my bed at ſuch a rate!
Now lay thee down, vain fool, and cry,
Thy true love ſeeks another mate.

No tears, alack,
Will call him back,
No tender words his heart allure;
I could bite
My tongue thro' ſpite——
Some plague bewitch'd me, that's for ſure.

SCENE V.

Changes to a Room in the Miller's Houſe.

Enter GILES, *followed by* PATTY *and* THEODOSIA.

" AIR.

" Giles. *Women's tongues are like mill-clappers,*
" *And from thence they learn the knack,*
" *Of for-ever-ſounding clack.*"——

Giles. Why, what the plague's the matter with you, what do you ſcold at me for? I am ſure I did not ſay an uncivil word, as I know of: I'll be judged by the young lady if I did.

Pat.

Pat. 'Tis very well, farmer; all I desire is, that you will leave the house: you see my father is not at home at present; when he is, if you have any thing to say, you know where to come.

Giles. Enough said, I don't want to stay in the house, not I; and I don't much care if I had never come into it.

The. For shame, farmer, down on your knees and beg Miss Fairfield's pardon for the outrage you have been guilty of.

Giles. Beg pardon, miss, for what?—I cod that's well enough; why I am my own master, be'nt I?—If I have no mind to marry, there's no harm in that, I hope: 'tis only changing hands.—This morning she would not have me; and now I won't have she.

Pat. Have you!—Heavens and earth! do you think then 'tis the missing of you that gives me concern?—No: I would prefer a state of beggary a thousand times beyond any thing I could enjoy with you: and be assured, if ever I was seemingly consenting to such a sacrifice, nothing should have compelled me to it, but the cruelty of my situation.

Giles. Oh as for that, I believes you; but you see the gudgeon would not bite as I told you a bit agone you know: we farmers never love to reap what we don't sow.

Pat. You brutish fellow, how dare you talk——

Giles. So, now she's in her tantrums again, and all for no manner of yearthly thing.

Pat. But be assured my lord will punish you severely for daring to make free with his name.

Giles. Who made free with it; did I ever mention my lord? 'Tis a curs'd lie.

Theo. Bless me! farmer!

Giles. Why it is, miss——and I'll make her prove her words——Then what does she mean by being punished? I am not afraid of nobody, nor beholding to nobody, that I do know of; while I pays my rent, my money, I believe, is as good as another's: egad, if it goes there, I think there be those deserve to be punished more than I.

Pat. Was ever unfortunate creature purſued as I am, by diſtreſſes and vexations!

The. My dear Patty—See, farmer, you have thrown her into tears—Pray be comforted.

AIR.

Patty. *Oh leave me, in pity! The falſhood I ſcorn;*
For ſlander the boſom untainted defies:
But rudeneſs and inſults are not to be borne,
Tho' offer'd by wretches we've ſenſe to deſpiſe.

Of women defenceleſs, how cruel the fate!
Paſs ever ſo cautious, ſo blameleſs her way,
Nature, and envy, lurk always in wait,
And innocence falls to their fury a prey.

SCENE VI.

MERVIN, THEODOSIA.

The. You are a pretty gentleman, are not you, to ſuffer a lady to be at a rendezvous before you?

Mer. Difficulties, my dear, and dangers——None of the company had two ſuits of apparel; ſo I was obliged to purchaſe a rag of one, and a tatter from another, at the expence of ten times the ſum they would fetch at the paper-mill.

The. Well, where are they?

Mer. Here, in this bundle——and tho' I ſay it, a very decent habiliment, if you have art enough to ſtick the parts together: I've been watching till the coaſt was clear to bring them to you.

The. Let me ſee——I'll ſlip into this cloſet and equip myſelf——All here is in ſuch confuſion, there will no notice be taken.

Mer. Do ſo; I'll take care nobody ſhall interrupt you in the progreſs of your metamorphoſis [*ſhe goes in*]—and if you are not tedious, we may walk off without being ſeen by any one.

The. Ha! ha! ha!——What a concourſe of atoms are here? tho', as I live, they are a great deal better than I expected.

Mer.

Mer. Well, pray make haſte; and don't imagine yourſelf at your toilette now, where mode preſcribes two hours, for what reaſon would ſcarce allow three minutes.

The. Have patience; the outward garment is on already; and I'll aſſure you a very good ſtuff, only a little the worſe for the mending.

Mer. Imagine it embroidery, and conſider it is your wedding ſuit.——Come, how far are you got?

The. Stay, you don't conſider there's ſome contrivance neceſſary.——Here goes the apron flounced and furbelow'd with a witneſs—Alas! alas! it has no ſtrings! what ſhall I do? Come, no matter, a couple of pins will ſerve——And now the cap——oh, mercy! here's a hole in the crown of it large enough to thruſt my head through.

Mer. That you'll hide with your ſtraw-hat; or, if you ſhould not——What, not ready yet?

The. Only one minute more—Yes, now the work's accompliſh'd.

AIR.

Who'll buy good luck, who'll buy, who'll buy
The gipſey's favours?——Here am I!
Through the village, through the town,
What charming ſav'ry ſcraps we'll earn!
Clean ſtraw ſhall be our beds of down,
And our withdrawing-room a barn.
Young and old, and grave, and gay,
The miſer and the prodigal;
Cit, courtier, bumpkin, come away;
I warrant we'll content you all.

SCENE VII.

MERVIN, THEODOSIA, FAIRFIELD, GILES.

Mer. Plague, here's ſomebody coming.

Fai. As to the paſt, farmer, 'tis paſt; I bear no malice for any thing thou haſt ſaid.

Giles. Why, Maſter Fairfield, you do know I had a great regard for Miſs Patty; but when I came to conſider all in all, I finds as how it is not adviſeable to change my condition yet awhile.

Fai. Friend Giles, thou art in the right; marriage is a ſerious point, and can't be conſidered too warily.——Ha, who have we here!—Shall I never keep my houſe clear of theſe vermin?———Look to the goods there, and give me a horſe-whip—by the Lord Harry, I'll make an example—Come here, Lady Lightfingers, let me ſee what thou haſt ſtolen.

Mer. Hold, miller, hold!

Fai. O gracious goodneſs! ſure I know this face—Miſs———young Madam Sycamore———Mercy heart, here's a diſguiſe;

The. Diſcover'd!

Mer. Miller, let me ſpeak to you.

The. What ill fortune is this!

Giles. Ill fortune———Miſs! I think there be nothing but croſſes and misfortunes of one kind or other.

Fai. Money to me, ſir! not for the world; you want no friends but what you have already—Lack-a-day, lack-a-day— ſee how luckily I came in: I believe you are the gentleman to whom I am charged to give this, on the part of my lord Aimworth———Bleſs, you, dear ſir, go up to his honour, with my young lady—There is a chaiſe waiting at the door to carry you———I and my daughter will take another way.

SCENE VIII.

MERVIN, THEODOSIA, GILES.

Mer. Pr'ythee read this letter, "and tell me what "you think of it."

The. Heavens, 'tis a letter from lord Aimworth!—We are betrayed.

Mer. By what means I know not.

The. I am ſo frighted and flurried, that I have ſcarce ſtrength enough to read it.

"SIR,

"It is with the greateſt concern I find, that I "have been unhappily the occaſion of giving ſome un-"eaſineſs to you and Miſs Sycamore: be aſſured, had I "been apprized of your prior pretenſions, and the young "lady's diſpoſition in your favour, I ſhould have been

"the

" the laſt perſon to interrupt your felicity. I beg, Sir,
" you will do me the favour to come up to my houſe,
" where I have already ſo far ſettled matters, as to be
" able to aſſure you, that every thing will go entirely
" to your ſatisfaction."

Mer. Well! what do you think of it!——Shall we go to the caſtle? " Well!——

" *The.* Well!——

" *Mer.* What do you think of it?

" *The.* Nay, what do you think of it?

" *Mer.* Egad, I can't very well tell——However,
" on the whole, I believe it would be wrong of us to
" proceed any further in our deſign of running away,
" even if the thing was practicable.

" *The.* I am entirely of your opinion. I ſwear this
" lord Aimworth is a charming man: I fancy 'tis
" lucky for you I had not been long enough acquaint-
" ed with him to find out all his good qualities.—But
" how the deuce came he to hear——

" *Mer.* No matter; after this, there can be nothing
" to apprehend.——What do you ſay, ſhall we go
" up to the caſtle?"

The. By all means! and in this very trim; to ſhow what we were capable of doing, if my father and mother had not come to reaſon.——" But, perhaps, the diffi-
" culties being removed, may leſſen your *penchant*, you
" men are ſuch unaccountable mortals.—Do you love
" me well enough to marry me, without making a
" frolic of it;

" *Mer.* Do I love you!——

" *The.* Ay, and to what degree?

" *Mer.* Why do you aſk me?——

AIR.

" *Who upon the oozy beech,*
" *Can count the num'rous ſands that lie;*
" *Or diſtinctly reckon each*
" *Tranſparent orb that ſtuds the ſky?*

" *As their multitude betray,*
" *And fruſtrate all attempts to tell:*
" *So 'tis impoſſible to ſay*
" *How much I love, I love ſo well.*"

But hark you, Mervin, will you take after my father, and be a very huſband now?—Or don't you think I ſhall take after my mother, and be a commanding wife!

Mer. Oh, I'll truſt you.

The. But you may pay for your confidence. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IX.

GILES.

So, there goes a couple! Icod, I believe Old Nick has got among the people in theſe parts. This is as queer a thing as ever I heard of.——Maſter Fairfield, and Miſs Patty, it ſeems, are gone to the caſtle too; where by what I larns from Ralph in the mill, my Lord has promiſed to get her a huſband among the ſervants. Now ſet in caſe the wind ſets in that corner, I have been thinking with myſelf who the plague it can be: there are no unmarried men in the family, that I do know of, excepting little Bob, the poſtillion, and Maſter Jonathan, the butler; and he's a matter of ſixty or ſeventy years old. I'll be ſhot if it be'nt little Bob. ——Icod, I'll take the way to the caſtle, as well as the reſt; for I'd fain ſee how the nail do drive. It is well I had wit enough to diſcern things, and a friend to adviſe with, or elſe ſhe would have fallen to my lot. ——But I have got a ſurfeit of going a courting, and burn me if I won't live a bachelor; for, when all comes to all, I ſee nothing but ill blood and quarrels among folk when they are married.

AIR.

Then hey for a frolicſome life!
I'll ramble where pleaſures are rife:
Strike up with the free-hearted laſſes;
And never think more of a wife.
Plague on it, men are but aſſes,
To run after noiſe and ſtrife.

Had

Had we been together buckl'd.
'Twould have prov'd a fine affair:
Dogs would have bark'd at the cuckold;
And boys, pointing, cry'd——Look there.

SCENE X.

Changes to a grand Apartment in Lord AIMWORTH'S *Houſe, opening to a View of the Garden.*

Lord AIMWORTH, FAIRFIELD, PATTY, RALPH.

L. Aim. Thus, Maſter Fairfield, I hope I have fully ſatisfied you with regard to the falſity of the imputation thrown upon your daughter and me——

Fai. My Lord, I am very well content; pray do not give yourſelf the trouble of ſaying any more.

Ral. No, my Lord, you need not ſay any more.

Fai. Hold your tongue, ſirrah.

L. Aim. I am ſorry, Patty, you have had this mortification.

Pat. I am ſorry, my Lord, you have been troubled about it; but really it was againſt my conſent.

Fai. Well, come children, we will not take up his honour's time any longer; let us be going towards home——Heaven proſper your Lordſhip; the pray'rs of me and my family ſhall always attend you.

L. Aim. Miller, come back——Patty, ſtay——

Fai. Has your Lordſhip any thing further to command us?

L. Aim. Why yes, Maſter Fairfield, I have a word or two ſtill to ſay to you——In ſhort, though you are ſatisfied in this affair, I am not; and you ſeem to forget the promiſe I made you, that, ſince I had been the means of loſing your daughter one huſband, I would find her another.

Fai. Your honour is to do as you pleaſe.

L. Aim. What ſay you, Patty, will you accept of a huſband of my chuſing?

Pat. My Lord, I have no determination; you are the beſt judge how I ought to act; whatever you command, I ſhall obey.

L. Aim.

L. Aim. Then, Patty, there is but one perſon I can offer you——and I wiſh, for your ſake, he was more deſerving——Take me——

Pat. Sir!

L. Aim. From this moment our intereſts are one, as our hearts; and no earthly power ſhall ever divide us.

Fai. "O the gracious!" Patty—my Lord—Did I hear right?——You, Sir, you marry a child of mine!

L. Aim. Yes, my honeſt old man, in me you behold the huſband deſigned for your daughter; and I am happy that, by ſtanding in the place of fortune, who has alone been wanting to her, I ſhall be able to ſet her merit in a light, where its luſtre will be rendered conſpicuous.

Fai. But good, noble Sir, pray conſider; don't go to put upon a ſilly old man: my daughter is unworthy ——Patty, child, why don't you ſpeak?

Pat. What can I ſay, father! what anſwer to ſuch unlook'd-for, ſuch unmerited, ſuch unbounded generoſity!

Ral. Down on your knees, and fall a crying.

Pat. Yes, Sir, as my father ſays, conſider——your noble friends, your relations—It muſt not, cannot be.—

" *L. Aim.* It muſt, and ſhall——Friends! relations!
" from henceforth I have none, that will not acknow-
" ledge you: and I am ſure, when they become ac-
" quainted with your perfections, thoſe, whoſe ſuffrage
" I moſt eſteem, will rather admire the juſtice of my
" choice, than wonder at its ſingularity."

AIR.

L. Aim. *My life, my joy, my bleſſing,*
In thee, each grace poſſeſſing,
All muſt my choice approve:

Patty. *To you my all is owing;*
O! take a heart o'erflowing
With gratitude and love.

L. Aim. *Thus infolding,*
Thus beholding,

Both.

Both. *One to my ſoul ſo dear:*
Can there be pleaſure greater!
Can there be bliſs completer!
'Tis too much to bear.

SCENE XI.

Enter Sir HARRY, *Lady* SYCAMORE, THEODOSIA MERVIN.

S. Har. Well, we have followed your Lordſhip's counſel, and made the beſt of a bad market——So my Lord, pleaſe to know our ſon-in-law, that is to be.

L. Aim. You do me a great deal of honour—I wiſh you joy, Sir, with all my heart.—And now, Sir Harry, give me leave to introduce to you a new relation of mine——This, Sir, is ſhortly to be my wife.

S. Har. My Lord!

L. Syc. Your Lordſhip's wife!

L. Aim. Yes, madam.

L. Syc. And why ſo, my Lord?

L. Aim. Why, faith, madam, becauſe I can't live happy without her——And I think ſhe has too many amiable, too many eſtimable qualities to meet with a worſe fate.

S. Har. Well, but you are a peer of the realm; you will have all the fleerers——

L. Aim. I know very well the ridicule that may be thrown on a Lord's marrying a miller's daughter; and I own, with bluſhes, it has for ſome time had too great weight with me: but we ſhould marry to pleaſe ourſelves, not other people: and, on mature conſideration, I can ſee no reproach juſtly merited, by raiſing a deſerving woman to a ſtation ſhe is capable of adorning, let her birth be what it will.

S. Har. Why 'tis very true, my Lord. I once knew a gentleman that married his cook-maid: he was a relation of my own—You remember fat Margery, my lady! She was a very good ſort of a woman, indeed ſhe was, and made the beſt ſuet dumplings I ever taſted.

L. Syc.

L. Syc. Will you never learn, Sir Harry, to guard your expreſſions?——Well, but give me leave, my Lord, to ſay a word to you——There are other ill conſequences attending ſuch an alliance.

L. Aim. One of them I ſuppoſe is, that I, a peer, ſhould be obliged to call this good old miller father-in-law. But where's the ſhame in that? He is as good as any Lord, in being a man; and if we dare ſuppoſe a Lord that is not an honeſt man, he is, in my opinion, the more reſpectable character. Come, Maſter Fairfield, give me your hand; from henceforth you have done with working; we will pull down your mill, and build you a houſe in the place of it; and the money I intended for the portion of your daughter, ſhall now be laid out in purchaſing a commiſſion for your ſon.

Ral. What, my Lord, will you make me a captain?

L. Aim. Ay, a colonel, if you deſerve it.

Ral. Then I'll keep Fan.

SCENE XII.

Lord AIMWORTH, *Sir* HARRY, *Lady* SYCAMORE, PATTY, THEODOSIA, MERVIN, FAIRFIELD, RALPH, GILES.

Giles. Ods bobs, where am I running—I beg pardon for my audacity.

Ral. Hip, farmer; come back, mon, come back—Sure my Lord's going to marry ſiſter himſelf; feyther's to have a fine houſe, and I'm to be a captain.

L. Aim. Ho, Maſter Giles, pray walk in; here is a lady who, I dare ſwear, will be glad to ſee you, and give orders that you ſhall always be made welcome.

Ral. Yes, farmer, you'll always be welcome in the kitchen.

L. Aim. What, have you nothing to ſay to your old acquaintance——Come, pray let the farmer ſalute you——Nay, a kiſs—I inſiſt upon it.

S. Har. Ha, ha, ha—hem!

L. Syc. Sir Harry, I am ready to ſink at the monſtrouſneſs of your behaviour.

L. Aim.

L. Aim. Fye, Maſter Giles, don't look ſo ſheepiſh; you and I were rivals, but not leſs friends at preſent. You have acted in this affair like an honeſt Engliſhman, who ſcorned even the ſhadow of diſhonour, and thou ſhall ſit rent-free for a twelvemonth.

S. Har. Come, ſhan't we all ſalute——With your leave, my Lord, I'll——

L. Syc. Sir Harry!

AIR.

L. Aim. *Yield who will to forms a martyr,*
While unaw'd by idle ſhame,
Pride for happineſs I barter,
Heedleſs of the millions blame.
Thus with love my arms I quarter;
Women grac'd in nature's frame,
Ev'ry privilege, by charter,
Have a right from man to claim.

The. *Eas'd of doubts and fears preſaging,*
What new joys within me riſe!
While mamma, her frowns aſſuaging,
Dares no longer tyrannize,
So long ſtorms and tempeſts raging,
When the bluſt'ring fury dies,
Ah! how lovely, how engaging,
Proſpects fair, and cloudleſs ſkies!

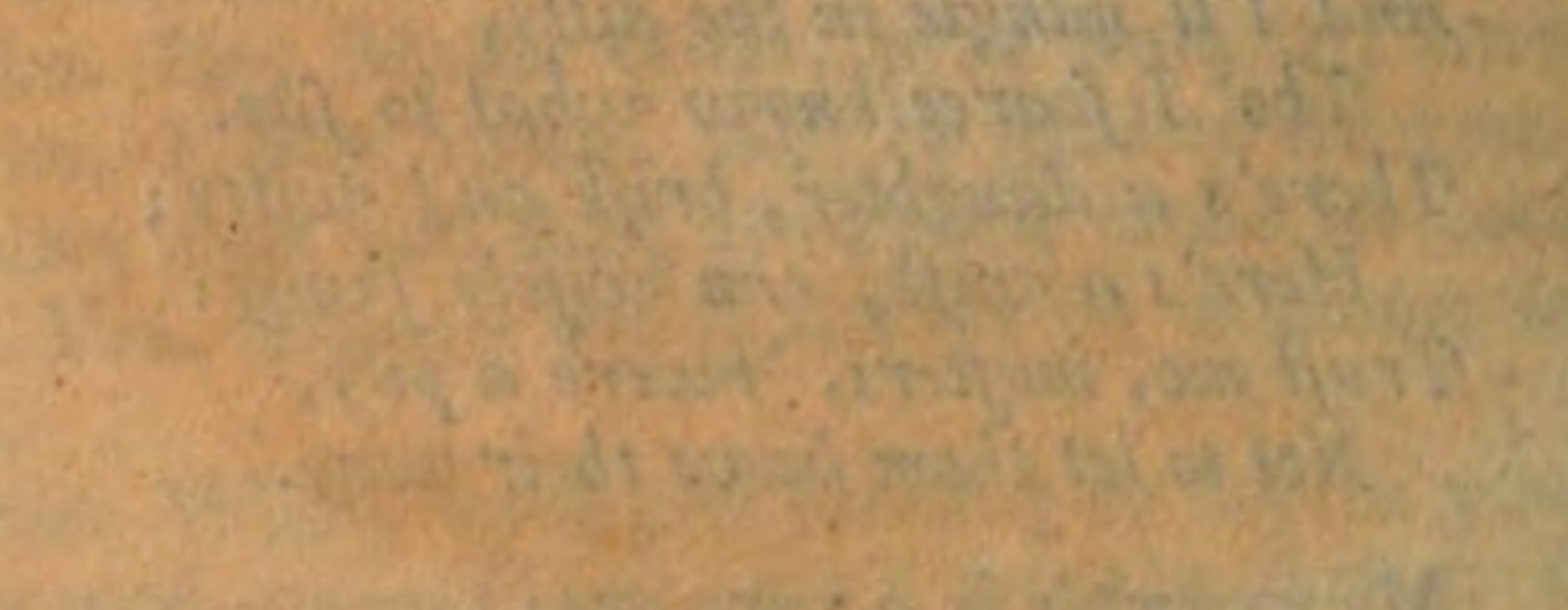
S. Har. *Dad but this is wond'rous pretty,*
Singing each a roun-de-lay;
And I'll mingle in the ditty,
Tho' I ſcarce know what to ſay.
There's a daughter, briſk and witty;
Here's a wife, can wiſely ſway:
Truſt me, maſters, 'twere a pity,
Not to let them have their way.

Patty. *My example is a rare one;*
But the cauſe may be divin'd:
Women want not merit——dare one
Hope diſcerning men to find.

O! may each accompliſh'd fair one,
Bright in perſon, ſage in mind,
Viewing my good fortune, ſhare one
Full as ſplendid, and as kind.

Giles. *Laugh'd at, ſlighted, circumvented,*
And expos'd for folks to ſee't,
'Tis as tho'f a man repented
For his follies in a ſheet.
But my wrongs go unreſented,
Since the fates have thought them meet:
This good company contented,
All my wiſhes are complete.

Finis.



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Bickerstaffe, Isaac

The maid of the mill the comic opera

London 1791

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